

THOUGHTS IN PRISON.

IN FIVE PARTS.

VIZ.

THE IMPRISONMENT—THE RETROSPECT—PUBLIC
PUNISHMENT—THE TRIAL—FUTURITY.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM DODD, LL. D.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

HIS LAST PRAYER,

Written in the Night before his Death:

THE CONVICT'S ADDRESS TO HIS
UNHAPPY BRETHREN;

AND

OTHER MISCELLANEOUS PIECES:

WITH

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE AUTHOR.

"—These evils I deserve, and more;
" Acknowledge them from God inflicted on me
" Justly; yet despair not of his final pardon,
" Whole ear is ever open, and his eye,
" Gracious to re-admit the Suppliant."

MILTON.

A NEW EDITION.

LONDON:

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1795.



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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Work now offered to the Public, was the last performance of one who often afforded amusement and instruction; who possessed the talents of pleasing in a high degree, whose labours were devoted to advance the interests of Religion and Morality, and who, during the greater part of his life, was esteemed, beloved and respected, by all to whom he was known. Unhappily for himself and his connections, the dictates of prudence were unattended to amidst the fashionable dissipation of the times. With many advantages, both natural and acquired, and with the most flattering prospects before him, he, by an act of folly, to give it no worse a name, plunged himself from a situation, in which he had every happiness to expect, into a state, which, to contemplate, must fill the mind with astonishment and horror. It was in some of the most dreadful moments of his life, when the exercise of every faculty might be pre-

fumed to be suspended, that the present work was composed : a work which will be ever read with wonder, as exhibiting an extraordinary exertion of the mental powers in very unpropitious circumstances, and affording, at the same time, a lesson worthy the most attentive consideration of every one into whose hands it may chance to fall. As the curiosity of the World will naturally follow the person whose solitude and confinement produced the instruction to be derived from this performance, a short Account of the Author is added. To enlarge on the merit of this Poem will be unnecessary. The feelings of every reader will estimate and proportionate its value. That it contains an awful admonition to the gay and dissipated, will be readily acknowledged by every reflecting mind, especially when it is considered as the bitter fruit of those fashionable indulgences which brought disgrace and death upon its unhappy author, in spite of learning and genius, accomplishments the most captivating, and services the most important to mankind.



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AN
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WILLIAM DODD was the eldest son * of a clergyman of the same name, who held the vicarage of Bourne, in the county of Lincoln, where he died the 8th day of August 1756, at the age of 54 years. His wife departed this life on the 21st of the preceding May. Their son was born at Bourne on the 29th day of May 1729, and, after finishing his school education, was admitted a Sizar of Clare-Hall, Cambridge, in the year 1745, under the tuition of Mr. John Courtail, since Archdeacon of Lewis. At the university he acquired the notice of his superiors by a close application to his studies; and in the year 1749-50, took his first degree of Bachelor of Arts with considerable reputation, his name being in the list of wranglers on that occasion. It was not, however, only in his academical pursuits that he was

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* He speaks of himself as descended from Sir Thomas Overbury.

emulous of distinction. Having a pleasing form, a genteel address, and a lively imagination, he was equally celebrated for accomplishments which seldom accompany a life of learned retirement. In particular, he was fond of the elegancies of dress, and became, as he ludicrously expressed it, a zealous votary of the God of Dancing, to whose service he dedicated much of that time and attention which he could borrow from his more important avocations.

The talents which he possessed he very early displayed to the public; and by the time he had attained the age of eighteen years, prompted by the desire of fame, and perhaps to increase his income, commenced author; in which character he began to obtain some degree of reputation. At this period of his life, young, thoughtless, volatile, and unexperienced, he precipitately quitted the university, and relying entirely on his pen, removed to the metropolis, where he entered largely into the gaities of the town, was a constant frequenter of all places of public diversion, and followed every species of amusement with the most dangerous avidity. In this course, however, he did not continue long. To the surprise of his friends, who least suspected him of taking such a step, without fortune, with few friends, and destitute of all means of supporting a family, he hastily united himself, on the 15th of April 1752, in marriage with Miss Mary Perkins, daughter of one of the domestics of Sir John Dolben, a young lady then residing in Frith Street, Soho, who, though largely endowed with personal attractions, was certainly deficient in mode of birth and fortune.



tune. To a person circumstanced as Mr. Dodd then was, no measure could be more imprudent, or apparently more ruinous and destructive of his future prospects in life. He did not, however, seem to view it in that light, but, with a degree of thoughtlessness natural to him, immediately took and furnished a house in Wardour-Street. Thus dancing on the brink of a precipice, and careless of to-morrow, his friends began to be alarmed at his situation. His father came to town in great distress upon the occasion; and by parental injunction he quitted his house before winter. By the same advice he probably was induced to adopt a new plan for his future subsistence. On the 19th of October, in that year, he was ordained a Deacon by the Bishop of Ely, at Caius College, Cambridge; and with more prudence than he had ever shown before, devoted himself with great assiduity to the study and duties of his profession. In these pursuits he appeared so sincere, that he even renounced all attention to his favourite objects, Polite Letters. At the end of his Preface to the *Beauties of Shakspeare*, published in this year, he says, "For my own part, better, and more important things henceforth demand my attention, and I here with no small pleasure take leave of Shakspeare and the Critics: as this work was begun and finished before I entered upon the sacred function, in which I am now happily employed, let me trust, this juvenile performance will prove no objection, since graver, and some very eminent members of the church have thought it no improper employ to comment,

“ explain, and publish the works of their own
“ country poets.”

The first service in which he was engaged as a Clergyman, was to assist the Reverend Mr. Wyatt, Vicar of West Ham, as his Curate: thither he removed, and there he spent the happiest and more honourable moments of his life. His behaviour was proper, decent, and exemplary. It acquired him the respect, and secured him the favour of his parishioners so far, that, on the death of their Lecturer in 1752, he was chosen to succeed him. His abilities had at this time every opportunity of being shown to advantage; and his exertions were so properly directed, that he soon became a favourite and popular preacher. Those who remember him at this period, will bear testimony to the indefatigable zeal which he exerted in his ministry, and the success which crowned his efforts. The follies of his youth seemed entirely extinguished, his friends viewed his conduct with the utmost satisfaction, and the world promised itself an example to hold out for the imitation of his brethren.

At this early season of his life he entertained favourable sentiments of the doctrine of Mr. Hutchinson; and was suspected to incline towards the opinions of the Methodists. A more mature age, however, induced him to renounce the one, and to disclaim the other. In 1752 he was appointed Lecturer of St. James, Garlick-Hill, which two years afterwards he exchanged for the same post at St. Olave, Hart-Street. About the same time he was appointed to preach Lady Moyer's Lectures at St. Paul's; where, from *The Visit*

of

of the Three Angels to Abraham, and other similar passages from the Old Testament, he endeavoured to prove the commonly received Doctrine of the Trinity. On the establishment of the Magdalen House, 1758, he was amongst the first and most active promoters of that charitable institution; which received great advantage from his zeal for its prosperity, and, even to the conclusion of his life, continued to be materially benefited by his labours.

From the time Mr. Dodd entered into the service of the Church, he resided at West Ham, and made up the deficiencies of his income by superintending the education of some young gentlemen who were placed under his care. In 1759 he took his degree of Master of Arts. In the year 1763, he was appointed Chaplain in Ordinary to the King, and about the same time became known to Dr. Squire, Bishop of St. David's, who received him into his patronage, presented him to the Prebend of Brecon, and recommended him to the Earl of Chetterfield, as a proper person to be intrusted with the tuition of his successor in the title. The next year saw him Chaplain to his Majesty. In 1766 he took the degree of Doctor of Laws at Cambridge. He had some expectations of succeeding to the Rectory of West Ham; but having been twice disappointed, he resigned his lectureships both there and in the city, and quitted the place: "a place (says he to Lord Chesterfield) ever
" dear and ever regretted by me, the loss of
" which, truly affecting to my mind (for there I
" was useful, and there I trust I was loved) nothing
" but your Lordship's friendship and connection

"should have counterbalanced*." From a passage in his *Thoughts in Prison*, it may be inferred that he was compelled to quit this his favourite residence:—a circumstance which he pathetically laments, and probably with great reason, as the first step to that change in his situation, which led him insensibly to his last fatal catastrophe.

On his leaving West Ham he removed to a house in Southampton Row, and at the same time launched out into scenes of expence, which his income, by this time not a small one, was unequal to support. He provided himself with a country-house at Ealing, and exchanged his chariot for a coach, in order to accommodate his pupils, who, besides his noble charge, were in general persons of family and fortune. About the same time it was his misfortune to obtain a prize of 1000*l.* in the state-lottery. Elated with this success, he engaged with a builder in a plan to erect a chapel-near the palace of the Queen, from whom it took its name. He entered also into a like partnership at Charlotte Chapel, Bloomsbury; and both these schemes were for some time very beneficial to him, though much inferior to his then expensive habits of living. His expectations from the former of these undertakings were extremely sanguine. It is reported that in fitting up his chapel near the palace, he flattered himself with the hopes of having some young royal auditors: and in that expectation assigned a particular pew or gallery for the heir apparent,

* See Dedication to a Sermon, entitled, "Popery inconsistent with the Natural Rights of Men in general, and Englishmen in particular." 8vo. 1768.

parent. But in this, as in many other of his views, he was disappointed.

In the year 1772 he obtained the rectory of Hockliffe, in Bedfordshire; the first cure of souls he ever had. With this also he held the vicarage of Chalgrove; and the two were soon after consolidated. An accident happened about this time, from which he narrowly escaped with his life. Returning from his living, he was stopt near Pancras by a highwayman, who discharged a pistol into the carriage, which happily, as it was then thought, only broke the glass. For this fact the delinquent was tried, and on Dr. Dodd's evidence convicted and hanged. Early in the next year Lord Chesterfield died, and was succeeded by our author's pupil, who appointed his preceptor his chaplain.

At this period Dr. Dodd appears to have been in the zenith of his popularity and reputation. Beloved and respected by all orders of people, he would have reached, in all probability, the situation which was the object of his wishes, had he possessed patience enough to have waited for it, and prudence sufficient to keep himself out of difficulties which might prove fatal to his integrity. But the habits of dissipation and expence had acquired too much influence over him. He had by their means involved himself in considerable debts. To extricate himself from them, he was tempted to an act which entirely cut off every hope which he could entertain of rising in his profession, and totally ruined him in the opinion of the world. On the translation of Bishop Mofs, in Feb. 1774, to the see of Bath and Wells, the valuable rectory
of

St. George, Hanover-square, fell to the disposal of the Crown, by virtue of the King's prerogative. Whether from the suggestion of his own mind, or from the persuasion of some friend, is uncertain; but on this occasion he took a step of all others the most wild and extravagant, and least likely to be attended with success. He caused an anonymous letter to be sent to Lady Apsley, offering the sum of 3000*l.* if by her means he could be presented to the living. The letter was immediately communicated to the Chancellor,—and, after being traced to the sender, was laid before his Majesty. The insult offered to so high an officer by the proposal, was followed by instant punishment. Dr. Dodd's name was ordered to be struck out of the list of chaplains. The press teemed with satire and invective; he was abused and ridiculed in the papers of the day; and to crown the whole, the transaction became a subject of entertainment in one of Mr. Foote's pieces at the Hay-Market.

As no explanation could justify so absurd a measure, so no apology could palliate it. An evasive letter in the newspapers, promising a justification at a future day, was treated with universal contempt. Stung with remorse, and feelingly alive to the disgrace he had brought on himself, he hastily quitted the place where neglect and insult attended him, and went to Geneva to his pupil, who presented him to the living of Winge in Buckinghamshire, which he held with Hockliffe, by virtue of a dispensation. Though encumbered with debts, he might still have retrieved his circumstances, if not his character, had he attended

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tended to the lessons of prudence; but his extravagance continued undiminished, and drove him to schemes which overwhelmed him with additional infamy. He descended so low as to become the editor of a newspaper; and is said to have attempted to disengage himself from his debts by a commission of bankruptcy: in which he failed. From this period every step led to complete his ruin. In the summer of 1776 he went to France, and, with little regard to decency, paraded it in a phaeton at the races on the plains of Sablons, dressed in all the foppery of the kingdom in which he then resided. He returned to England about the beginning of winter, and continued to exercise the duties of his function, particularly at the Magdalen Chapel, where he still was heard with approbation, and where his last sermon was preached, February 2. 1777, two days only before he signed the fatal instrument which brought him to an ignominious end.

Pressed at length by creditors, whose importunities he was unable longer to soothe, he fell upon an expedient, from the consequences of which he could not escape. He forged a bond, from his pupil Lord Chesterfield, for the sum of 4200l. and upon the credit of it obtained a considerable sum of money. Detection of the fraud almost immediately followed. He was taken before a magistrate, and committed to prison. At the sessions held at the Old Bailey, Feb. 24. his trial commenced; and the commission of the offence being clearly proved, he was pronounced guilty; but the sentence was postponed until the sentiments of the judges could be taken respecting the admissibility
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of an evidence, whose testimony had been made use of to convict him.

This accident suspended his fate until the ensuing session. In the mean time, the doubt which had been suggested as to the validity of the evidence, was removed, by the unanimous opinion of the judges, that the testimony of the person objected to had been properly and legally received. This information was communicated to the criminal on the 12th of May; and on the 26th of the same month he was brought to the bar to receive his sentence. Being asked what he had to allege why it should not be pronounced upon him, he addressed the court in the following animated and pathetic speech; in the composition of which he is said to have been materially assisted by a very eminent writer :

“ MY LORD,

“ I now stand before you a dreadful example of human infirmity. I entered upon public life with the expectations common to young men whose education has been liberal, and whose abilities have been flattered; and, when I became a clergyman, considered myself as not impairing the dignity of the order. I was not an idle, nor I hope an useless minister. I taught the truths of Christianity with the zeal of conviction and the authority of innocence. My labours were approved, my pulpit became popular; and I have reason to believe, that of those who heard me, some have been preserved from sin, and some have been reclaimed. Condescend, my Lord, to think,

if

if these considerations aggravate my crime, how much they must embitter my punishment !

“ Being distinguished and elated by the confidence of mankind, I had too much confidence in myself ; and thinking my integrity what others thought it, established in sincerity, and fortified by religion, I did not consider the danger of vanity, nor suspect the deceitfulness of my own heart. The day of conflict came, in which temptation surprised and overwhelmed me. I committed the crime, which I entreat your Lordship to believe that my conscience hourly represents to me in its full bulk of mischief and malignity. Many have been overpowered by temptation, who are now among the penitent in heaven.

“ To an act now waiting the decision of vindictive justice, I will not presume to oppose the counterbalance of almost thirty years (a great part of the life of man) passed in exciting and exercising charity ; in relieving such distresses as I now feel, in administering those consolations which I now want. I will not otherwise extenuate my offence, than by declaring, what many circumstances make probable, that I did not intend to be finally fraudulent. Nor will it become me, to apportion my punishment, by alleging that my sufferings have been not much less than my guilt. I have fallen from reputation, which ought to have made me cautious ; and from a fortune, which ought to have given me content : I am sunk at once into poverty and scorn ; my name and my crime fill the ballads in the street, the sport of the thoughtless, and the triumph of the wicked.

"It may seem strange, remembering what I have lately been, that I should still wish to continue what I am:—but contempt of death, how speciously soever it might mingle with Heathen virtues, has nothing suitable to Christian penitence. Many motives impel me to beg earnestly for life. I feel the natural horror of a violent death, and the universal dread of untimely dissolution. I am desirous of recompensing the injury I have done to the clergy, to the world, and to religion, and to efface the scandal of my crime by the example of my repentance. But, above all, I wish to die with thoughts more composed, and calmer preparation. The gloom of a prison, the anxiety of a trial, and the inevitable vicissitudes of passion, leave the mind little disposed to the holy exercises of prayer and self-examination. Let not a little time be denied me, in which I may, by meditation and contrition, be prepared to stand at the tribunal of Omnipotence, and support the presence of that Judge who shall distribute to all according to their works; who will receive to pardon the repenting sinner, and from whom the merciful shall obtain mercy.

"For these reasons, amidst shame and misery, I yet wish to live; and most humbly entreat, that I may be recommended by your Lordship to the clemency of his Majesty."

From this time the friends of Dr. Dodd were assiduously employed in endeavouring to save his life. Besides the petitions of many individuals, the members of the several charities which had

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been benefited by him, joined in applications to the throne for mercy ; the City of London likewise, in its corporate capacity, solicited a remission of the punishment, in consideration of the advantages which the public had derived from his various and laudable exertions. The petitions were supposed to be signed by near thirty thousand persons. They were, however, of no avail. On the 15th of June the Privy Council assembled, and deliberated on the cases of the several prisoners then under condemnation ; and in the end a warrant was ordered to be made out for the execution of Dr. Dodd, with two others (one of whom was afterwards reprieved), on the 27th of the same month.

Having been flattered with hopes of a pardon, he appeared to be much shocked at the intimation of his approaching destiny ; but resumed in a short time a degree of fortitude, sufficient to enable him to pass through the last scene of his life with firmness and decency. On the 26th he took leave of his wife and some friends, after which he declared himself ready to atone for the offence he had given to the world. His deportment was meek, humble, and devout, expressive of resignation and contrition, and calculated to inspire sentiments of respect for his person, and concern for his unhappy fate.

Of his behaviour at this awful juncture, a particular account was given by Mr. Villette, Ordinary of Newgate, in the following terms :

“ On the morning of his death I went to him,
 “ with the Rev. Mr. Dobey, Chaplain of the
 C “ Magdalen,

" Magdalen, whom he had desired to attend him
 " to the place of execution. He appeared com-
 " posed; and when I asked him how he had been
 " supported, he said he had had some comfortable
 " sleep, by which he should be the better enabled
 " to perform his duty.

" As we went from his room, in our way to the
 " chapel, we were joined by his friend, who had
 " spent the foregoing evening with him, and also
 " by another clergyman. When we were in the
 " vestry adjoining to the chapel, he exhorted his
 " fellow-sufferer, who had attempted to destroy
 " himself, but had been prevented by the vigilance
 " of the keeper. He spoke to him with great ten-
 " derness and emotion of heart, entreating him
 " to consider that he had but a short time to live,
 " and that it was highly necessary that he as well
 " as himself made good use of their time, im-
 " plored pardon of God under a deep sense of sin,
 " and looked to that Lord by whose merits alone
 " sinners could be saved. He desired me to call
 " in the other gentleman, who likewise assisted him
 " to move the heart of the poor youth: but the
 " Doctor's words were the most pathetic and ef-
 " fectual. He lifted up his hands, and cried out,
 " O Lord Jesus, have mercy on us, and give, O
 " give unto him, my fellow-sinner, that as we
 " suffer together, we may go together to heaven!
 " His conversation to this poor youth was so mov-
 " ing, that tears flowed from the eyes of all pre-
 " sent.

" When we went into the chapel to prayer
 " and the holy communion, true contrition and
 " warmth of devotion appeared evident in him
 " throughout

" throughout the whole service.—After it was
 " ended, he again addressed himself to Harris in
 " the most moving and persuasive manner, and not
 " without effect : for he declared that he was glad
 " he had not made away with himself, and said he
 " was easier, and hoped he should now go to hea-
 " ven. The Doctor told him how Christ had suf-
 " fered for them ; and that he himself was a great-
 " er sinner than he, as he had sinned more against
 " light and conviction, and therefore his guilt
 " was greater ; and that, as he was confident that
 " mercy was shown to his soul, so he should look
 " to Christ, and trust in his merits.

" He prayed God to bless his friends who were
 " present with him, and to give his blessing to all
 " his brethren the clergy ; that he would pour out
 " his Spirit upon them, and make them true mi-
 " nisters of Jesus Christ, and that they might fol-
 " low the divine precepts of their heavenly Ma-
 " ster. Turning to one who stood near him, he
 " stretched out his hand, and said, Now, my dear
 " friend, speculation is at an end ; all must be
 " real ! what poor ignorant beings we are ! He
 " prayed for the Magdalens, and wished they
 " were there, to sing for him the 23d psalm.

" After he had waited some time for the officers,
 " he asked what o'clock it was ; and being told
 " that it was half an hour after eight, he said, ' I
 " wish they were ready, for I long to be gone.'
 " He requested of his friends, who were in tears
 " about him, to pray for him : to which he was
 " answered by two of them, ' We pray more
 " than language can utter.' He replied, ' I be-
 " lieve it.'

" At length he was summoned to go down in-
 " to a part of the yard which is enclosed from the
 " rest of the gaol, where the two unhappy con-
 " victs and the friends of the Doctor were alone.
 " On his seeing two prisoners looking out of the
 " windows, he went to them, and exhorted them
 " so pathetically, that they both wept abundant-
 " ly. He said once, ' I am now a spectacle to
 " men, and shall soon be a spectacle to angels.'
 " Just before the sheriff's officers came with
 " the halters, one who was walking with him told
 " him that there was yet a little solemnity he
 " must pass through before he went out. He
 " asked, ' What is that?' ' You will be
 " bound.' He looked up, and said, ' Yet I am
 " free; my freedom is there,' pointing upwards.
 " —He bore it with Christian patience, and be-
 " yond what might have been expected; and
 " when the men offered to excuse tying his
 " hands, he desired them to do their duty, and
 " thanked them for their kindness*. After he
 " was bound, I offered to assist him with my arm
 " in conducting him through the yard, where
 " several people were assembled to see him; but
 " he replied with seeming pleasure. ' No! I am
 " as firm as a rock.'—As he passed along the
 " yard, the spectators and prisoners wept and
 " bemoaned him; and he, in return, prayed God
 " to bless them.

On

* It was done in the passage leading to the chapel, by or-
 der of Mr. Akerman, the keeper, to prevent his being gaz-
 ed at; to whom he desired I would return his sincere thanks
 for all civilities to him, even to the last.

“ On the way to execution he consoled himself in reflecting and speaking on what Christ had suffered for him; lamenting the depravity of human nature, which made sanguinary laws necessary; and said he could gladly have died in the prison-yard, as being let out to public execution tended greatly to distress him. He desired me to read to him the 51st psalm, and also pointed out an admirable penitential prayer from Rossell’s Prisoner’s Director. He prayed again for the king, and likewise for the people.

“ When he came near the street where he formerly dwelt, he was much affected, and wept. He said, probably his tears would seem to be the effect of cowardice, but it was a weakness he could not well help; and added, he hoped he was going to a better home.

“ When he arrived at the gallows, he ascended the cart, and spoke to his fellow-sufferer. He then prayed, not only for himself, but also for his wife, and the unfortunate youth that suffered with him; and declaring that he died in the true faith of the gospel of Christ, in perfect love and charity with all mankind, and with thankfulness to his friends, he was launched into eternity, imploring mercy for his soul for the sake of the blessed Redeemer.”

His corpse, on the Monday following, was carried to Cowley, in Buckinghamshire, and deposited in the church there.

The following Paper was intended to have been read by Mr. Villette at the place of execution, but was omitted, as it seemed not possible to communicate the knowledge of it to so great a number of persons as were then assembled.

“ TO the words of dying men regard has always been paid. I am brought hither to suffer death for an act of fraud, of which I confess myself guilty with shame, such as my former state of life naturally produces, and I hope with such sorrow as He, to whom the heart is known, will not disregard. I repent that I have violated the laws by which peace and confidence are established among men; I repent that I have attempted to injure my fellow-creatures; and I repent that I have brought disgrace upon my order, and discredit upon my religion: but my offences against God are without name or number, and can admit only of general confession and general repentance.—Grant Almighty God, for the sake of Jesus Christ, that my repentance, however late, however imperfect, may not be in vain!

“ The little good that now remains in my power, is to warn others against those temptations by which I have been seduced. I have always sinned against conviction; my principles have never been shaken; I have always considered the Christian religion as a revelation from God, and its divine Author as the Saviour of the world: but the laws of God, though never disowned by me, have often been forgotten. I was led astray from religious strictness by the delusion of show and

and the delights of voluptuousness. I never knew or attended to the calls of frugality, or the needful minuteness of painful economy. Vanity and pleasure, into which I plunged, required expence disproportionate to my income; expence brought distress upon me; and distress, importunate distress, urged me to temporary fraud.

“ For this fraud I am to die; and I die declaring, in the most solemn manner, that, however I have deviated from my own precepts, I have taught others, to the best of my knowledge, and with all sincerity, the true way to eternal happiness. My life, for some few unhappy years past, has been dreadfully erroneous; but my ministry has been always sincere. I have constantly believed, and I now leave the world solemnly avowing my conviction, that there is no other name under heaven by which we can be saved, but only the name of the Lord Jesus; and I entreat all who are here to join with me in my last petition, that, for the sake of that Lord Jesus Christ, my sins may be forgiven, and my soul received into his everlasting kingdom.

WILLIAM DODD.”

June 27. 1777.

ADVER.

ADVERTISEMENT

ORIGINALLY PREFIXED TO THE

PRISON THOUGHTS.

THE following Work, as the dates of the respective parts evince, was begun by its unhappy Author in his apartments at Newgate, on the evening of the day subsequent to his trial and conviction at Justice-hall, and was finished, amidst various necessary interruptions, in little more than the space of two months.

Prefixed to the MANUSCRIPT is the ensuing NOTE:

April 23. 1777.

“ I began these Thoughts merely from the
“ impression of my mind, without plan, purpose,
“ or motive, more than the situation and state of
“ my soul. I continued them on a thoughtful
“ and regular plan; and I have been enabled
“ wonderfully—in a state, which in better days
“ I should have supposed would have destroyed
“ all power of reflection—to bring them nearly
“ to a conclusion. I dedicate them to God, and
“ to the *reflecting Serious* among my fellow-crea-
“ tures; and I bless the Almighty for the ability
“ to go through them, amidst the terrors of this
“ dire

“ dire place, and the bitter anguish of my discon-
“ solate mind !

“ The Thinking will easily pardon all inaccu-
“ racies, as I am neither *able* nor *willing* to read
“ over those melancholy lines with a *curious* and
“ *critical* eye ! They are imperfect, but the lan-
“ guage of the heart ; and, had I time and incli-
“ nation, might and should be improved.

“ But——

“ W. D.”

The few little Pieces subjoined to the *Thoughts*,
and the Author's *Last Prayer*, were found amongst
his papers. Their evident connection with the
Poem was the inducement for adding them to the
Volume.

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THOUGHTS IN PRISON.

COMMENCED

SUNDAY EVENING, EIGHT O'CLOCK*,

February 23. 1777.

WEEK THE FIRST.

THE IMPRISONMENT.

MY friends are gone ! Harsh on its sullen hinge
Grates the dread door : the massy bolts respond
Tremendous to the furly keeper's touch.
The dire keys clang, with movement dull and slow
While their behest the ponderous locks perform :
And fastened firm, the object of their care
Is left to solitude,—to sorrow left.

But wherefore fastened ? Oh still stronger bonds
Than bolts, or locks, or doors of molten brass,
To solitude and sorrow would consign
His anguish'd soul, and prison him, though free !
For, whither should he fly, or where produce
In open day, and to the golden sun,
His hapless head ! whence every laurel torn,
On his bald brow sits grinning Infamy ;
And all in sportive triumph twines around
The keen, the stinging adders of disgrace !

Yet

* The hour when they lock up in this dismal place.

Yet what's disgrace with man? or all the stings
Of pointed scorn? What the tumultuous voice
Of erring multitudes? Or what the shafts
Of keenest malice, levell'd from the bow
Of human inquisition?—if the God,
Whoknows the heart, looks with complacence down
Upon the struggling victim, and beholds
Repentance bursting from the earth-bent eye,
And faith's red cross held closely to the breast!

Oh Author of my being! of my bliss
Beneficent dispenser! wond'rous power,
Whose eye, all-searching, thro' this dreary gloom
Discerns the deepest secrets of the soul,
Assist me! With thy ray of light divine
Illumine my dark thoughts; upraise my low;
And give me wisdom's guidance, while I strive
Impartially to state the dread account,
And call myself to trial! Trial far
Than that more fearful—though how fearful that
Which trembling late I prov'd! Oh aid my hand
To hold the balance equal, and allow
The few sad moments of remaining life
To retrospection useful! make my end,
As my first wish (thou know'st the heart) has been,
To make my whole of being to my friends,
My fellow-pilgrims through this world of woe,
Instructive!—Oh could I conduct but one,
One only with me, to our Canaan's rest,
How could I meet my fate, nor think it hard!

Not think it hard?—Burst into tears, my soul;
Gush every pore of my distracted frame,
Gush into drops of blood!—But one; save one,
Or guide to Canaan's rest?—when all thy views
In better days were dedicate alone

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To guide, persuade to that celestial rest,
Souls which have listened with devotion's ear
To Sion's songs enchanting from thy lips,
And tidings sweet of Jesu's pardoning love!

But one, save one?—Oh, what a rest is this!
Oh what a Sabbath in this dungeon's gloom,
This prison-house, meet emblem of the realm
Reserv'd for the ungodly! Hark, methinks
I hear the cheerful melody of praise
And penitential sweetness*! 'Tis the sound,
The well-known sound, to which my soul attun'd
For year succeeding year, hath hearken'd glad,
And still with fresh delight: while all my powers
In blest employ have prest the saving truths
Of grace divine, and faith's all-conquering might,
On the sure Rock of Ages grounded firm.

Those hours are gone! and here, from heaven
shut out,

And heavenly works like these, on this lov'd day,
Rest of my God,—I only hear around
The dismal clang of chains, the hoarse rough shout
Of dissonant imprecation, and the cry
Of misery and vice, in fearful din
Impetuous mingled; while my frightened mind
Shrinks back in horror! while the scalding tears,
Involuntary starting, furrow down
My sickly cheeks; and whirling thought, confus'd
For giddy moments, scarce allows to know
Or where, or who, or what a wretch I am!

Not know?—Alas! too well it strikes my heart,
Emphatical it speaks! while dungeons, chains,
D And

* Referring more immediately to the duty of the Magda-
len-Chapel.

And bars and bolts proclaim the mournful truth,
 "Ah what a wretch thou art! how sunk, how fall'n,
 "* From what high state of bliss, into what woe!"
 Fall'n from the topmost bough that plays in air
 E'en of the tallest cedar; where aloft
 Proud happiness her tow'ring eyerie built,
 Built, as I dreamt, for ages. Idle dream!
 And yet, amongst the millions of mankind,
 Who sleep like me, how few, like me deceiv'd,
 Do not indulge the same fantastic dream!

Give me the angel's clarion!—Let me sound
 Loud as the blast which shall awake the dead;
 Oh let me sound, and call the slumberers forth
 To view the vision which delusion charms;
 To shake the potent incantation off;
 Or ere it burst in ruin on their souls,
 As it has burst on mine.—Not on my soul!
 Retract the dread idea: Righteous God!
 Not on my soul! Oh thou art gracious all;
 And with an eye of pity from thy throne
 Of majesty supernal, thou behold'st
 The creatures of thy hand, thy feeble sons,
 Struggling with sin, with Satan, and the world,
 Their sworn and deadly foes; and having felt
 In human flesh the trials of our kind,
 Know'st sympathetic how to aid the tried!

Rock of my hope! the rash, rash phrase forgive;
 Safe is my soul; nor can it know one fear.
 Grounded on Thee Unchangeable! Thee first,
 Thee last, great Cleanser of all human sin!

But though secure the vessel rides in port,
 Held firm by faith's strong anchor.—well it suits
 The

The mariner to think by what strange means
Through perils unconceivable he pass'd,
Through rocks, sands, pirates, storms, and boiste-
rous waves.

And happily obtain'd that port at last.

On these my thoughts are bent; nor deem it
Minist'ring angels! whose benignant task, [wrong,
Assign'd by Heav'n, is to console distress,
And hold up human hearts amidst the toil
Of human woe *!—Blest spirits, who delight
In sweet, submissive resignation's smile.

To that high will you know for ever right;—
Deem it not wrong, that with a weeping eye,
Deem it not wrong, that with a bleeding heart,
I dwell a while, unworthiest of my race,
On those black rocks, those quicksands, waves,
and storms,

Which in a sea of trouble have engulf'd
All, all my earthly comforts; and have left
Me, a poor naked, shipwreck'd, suffering wretch,
On this bleak shore, in this confinement drear;
At sight of which, in better days, my soul
Hath started back with horror! while my friend,
My bosom-partner in each hour of pain,
With antidotes preventive kindly arm'd,
Trembling for my lov'd health, when christian calls
And zeal for others' welfare, haply brought
My steps attendant on this den of death!

Oh dismal change! now not in friendly sort
A christian visitor, to pour the balm
Of christian comfort in some wretch's ear—
I am that wretch myself! and want, much want,

D 2

The

* See Psalm xxxiv. 7. Heb. i. 14.

The christian consolation I bestow'd,
 So cheerfully bestow'd! want, want, my God,
 From Thee the mercy, from my fellow-man
 The lenient mercy, which, great Judge of hearts,
 To Thee I make the solemn, sad appeal—
 That mercy which Thou know'st my gladsome soul
 Ever sprang forth with transport to impart!

Why then, mysterious Providence! pursued
 With such unfeeling ardour? why pursued
 To death's dread bourn, by men to me unknown!
 Why—Stop the deep question; it o'erwhelms my
 soul; [brain

It reels, it staggers!—Earth turns round!—my
 Whirls in confusion! my impetuous heart
 Throbs with pulsations not to be restrain'd? [son!
 Why?—where?—Oh Chesterfield! my son, my

Nay, talk not of composure! I had thought
 In olden time, that my weak heart was soft,
 And pity's self might break it.—I had thought
 That marble-eyed severity would crack
 The slender nerves which guide my reins of sense,
 And give me up to madness. 'Tis not so:

My heart is callous, and my nerves are tough:
 It will not break! they will not crack; or else
 What more, just Heaven, was wanting to the deed,
 Than to behold—Oh that eternal night
 Had in that moment screen'd me from myself!—
 My Stanhope to behold, whose filial ear
 Drank pleas'd the lore of wisdom from my tongue.
 My Stanhope to behold!—Ah piercing sight!
 Forget it;—'tis distraction:—Speak who can!

But I am lost! a criminal adjudg'd!
 A guilty miscreant! Canst thou think, my friend,
 Oh Butler,—'midst a million faithful found!—

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Oh canst thou think, who know'st, who long hast
known,

My inmost soul ; oh canst thou think that life,
From such rude outrage for a moment sav'd,
And sav'd almost by a miracle *, deserves
The languid wish, or e'er can be sustain'd ?

It can—it must ! That miracle alone
To life gives consequence. Oh deem it not
Presumptuous, that my grateful soul thus rates
The present high deliverance it hath found ;—
Sole effort of thy wisdom, Sovereign Power,
Without whose knowledge not a sparrow falls !
Oh may I cease to live, ere cease to bless
That interposing hand, which turn'd aside,—
Nay to my life and preservation turn'd
The fatal blow precipitate, ordain'd
To level all my little hopes in dust,
And give me to the grave ! Rather, my hand,
Forget thy cunning ! Rather shall my tongue
In gloomy silence bury every note
To my glad heart respondent, than I cease
To dedicate to Him who spar'd my life.
Each breath, each power, while he vouchsafes to
lend

The precious boon !—To Him be all its praise !
To Him be all its service ! Long or short,
The gift's the same : to live or die to him
Is gain sufficient, everlasting gain ;
And may that gain be mine !—I live, I live !

D 3

Ye

* Referring to the case reserved for the solemn decision of the twelve judges ; and which gave the prisoner a much longer space than his most sanguine friends could have expected, from the complexion of the process. See the *Sessions Paper* for Feb. 1777.

Ye hours, ye minutes, bounty of his grace,
 Fleet not away without improvement due :
 Rich on your wings bear penitence and prayer
 To Heaven's all-clement Ruler ; and to man
 Bear all the retribution man can make !
 Ye precious hours, ye moments snatch'd from death,
 Replete with incense rise,—that my cheer'd soul,
 When comes the solemn call, may spring away,
 Delighted, to the bosom of its God !

Who shall condemn the trust ?—proud rationals
 (That deep in speculation's 'wilderling maze
 Bemuse themselves with error, and confound
 The laws of men, of nature, and of Heav'n)
 Presumptuous in their wisdom, dare dethrone
 Even from his works the Maker : and contend
 That he who form'd it governs not the world :
 While, steep'd in sense's Lethe, sons of earth
 From the world's partial picture gaily draw
 Their mad conclusions. Bold broad-staring vice,
 Lull'd on the lap of every mundane bliss,
 At meek-eyed Virtue's patient suffering scoffs,
 And dares with dauntless insolence the God
 Regardless of his votaries !—Vain and blind !
 Alike through wisdom or through folly blind—
 Whose dim contracted view the petty round,
 The mere horizon of the present hour
 In darkness terminates ! Oh could I ope
 The golden portals of eternal day ;
 Pour on your sight the congregated blaze
 Of light, of wisdom, bursting from the throne
 Of universal glory ; on the round
 The boundless cycle of His moral plan,
 Who, hid in clouds terrific, Master sits
 Of subject men and worlds ; and sees at once

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The ample scene of present, future, past,
 All naked to his eye of flame :—all rang'd
 In harmony complete to work his will,
 And finish with the plaudit of the skies !

But,—while this whelming blazon may not burst
 On the weak eyes of mortals ; while confin'd
 Thro' dark dim glass, with dark dim sight to look
 All trembling to the future, and collect
 The scatter'd rays of wisdom ; while referr'd
 Our infant reason to the guiding hand
 Of faith strong-eyed, which never quits the view
 Of Jesus, her great pole-star ! from whose word,
 Irradiatè with the lustre of his love,
 She learns the mighty Master to explore
 In all his works : and from the meanest taught
 Beholds the God, the Father,—Scorn ye not,
 My fellow-pilgrims, fellow-heirs of death,
 And, oh triumphant thought !—my fellow-heirs
 Of life immortal ;—if not sold to sense
 And infidelity's black cause, you cast
 Ungracious from yourselves the proffer'd boon :
 —Then scorn not, oh my friends, when Heaven
 vouchsafes

To teach by meanest objects, reptiles, birds,
 To take one lesson from a worm like me !

Proof of a gracious providence I live ;—
 To him be all the glory ! Of his care
 Paternal, his supporting signal love,
 I live each hour an argument. Away
 The systematic dulness of dispute !
 Away, each doating reasoner !—I feel,
 Feel in my inmost heart the conscious sense,
 The grateful pressure of distinguish'd grace,
 And live, and only wish for life to praise it.

For say, my soul,—nor 'midst this silence sad,

This

This midnight, awful, melancholy gloom,
 Nor in this solemn moment of account
 'Twixt thee and Heaven,—when on his altar lies
 A sacrifice thy naked bleeding heart !
 Say, nor self-flattering, to thy conscience hold
 The mirror of deceit : could'st thou have thought
 Thy nerves, thy head, thy heart, thy frame, thy sense,
 Sufficient to sustain the sudden shock,
 Rude as a bursting earthquake, which at once
 Toppled the happy edifice adown,
 Whelm'd thee and thine beneath its ruinous crash,
 And buried all in sorrow ?—Torn away
 Impetuous from thy home, thy much-lov'd home,
 Without one moment to reflection giv'n !
 By soothing, solemn promise led to place
 Ingenuous all thy confidence of life
 In men, assuming gentle pity's guise !
 Vain confidence in ought beneath the sun !
 Behold the hour, the dreadful hour arriv'd :
 The prison opes its ruthless gates upon thee !

Oh Horror ! But what's this, this fresh attack !
 'Tis she, 'tis she ! my weeping, fainting wife !

“ And hast thou faithful found me ? Has thy love

“ Thus burst thro' ev'ry barrier ? Hast thou trac'd

“ —Deprest in health, and timid as thou art—

“ At midnight trac'd the desolate wild streets,

“ Thus in a prison's gloom to throw thy arms

“ Of conjugal endearment round the neck

“ Of thy lost husband ?—Fate, exact thy worst ;

“ The bitterness is past.”—Idea vain !

To tenfold bitterness drench'd in my deep cup

Of gall the morning rises ! Statue like,

Inanimate, half dead, and fainting half,

To stand a spectacle !—the præter stern

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Denying to my pleading tears one pang
 Of human sympathy ! Conducted forth,
 Amidst the unfeeling populace ; pursued
 Like some deer, which from the hunter's aim
 Hath ta'en its deadly hurt ; and glad to find—
 Panting with woe,—my refuge in a gaol !
 Can misery stretch more tight the torturing cord ?

But hence this softness ! Wherefore thus lament
 These petty poor escutcheons of thy fate,
 When lies—all worthy of thyself and life,
 Cold in the herse of ruin ?—Rather turn [tears,
 Grateful thine eyes, and raise, though red with
 To his high throne, who looks on thy distress
 With fatherly compassion ; kindly throws
 Sweet comfort's mixture in thy cup, and sooths
 With Gilead's balm thy death-wound. He it is
 Who, 'midst the shock disrupting, holds in health
 Thy shatter'd frame, and keeps thy reason clear ;
 He, He it is, whose pitying powers supports
 Thy humbled soul, deep humbled in the dust,
 Beneath the sense of guilt ; the mournful sense
 Of deep transgression 'gainst thy fellow men,
 Of sad offence 'gainst Him, thy Father God ;
 Who, lavish in his bounties, woo'd thy heart
 With each paternal blessing ;—ah ingrate,
 And worthless ! Yet—(His mercies who can count,
 Or truly speak his praise !)—Yet through this
 Of self-conviction, lowly He vouchsafes [gloom
 To dart a ray of comfort, like the sun's,
 All-cheering through a summer's evening shower !
 Arch'd in his gorgeous sky, I view the bow
 Of grace fix'd emblem ! 'Tis that grace alone
 Which gives my soul its firmness ; builds my hope
 Beyond the grave ; and bids me spurn the earth !

First

First of all blessings, hail! Yet Thou, from whom
 Both first and last, both great and small proceed;
 Exhaustless source of every good to man,
 Accept for all, the tribute of my praise;
 For all are thine!—Thine the ingenuous friends,
 Who solace with compassion sweet my woe;
 Mingle with mine their sympathetic tears;
 Incessant and disinterested toil
 To work my weal; and, delicately kind,
 Watch every keener sensibility
 That lives about my soul. Oh, more than friends,
 In tenderness my children!—Thine are too
 The very keepers of the rugged jail,
 —Ill school to learn humanity's soft lore!—
 Yet here humanity their duty pays,
 Respectably affecting! Whilst they tend
 My little wants, officious in their zeal,
 They turn away, and fain would hide the tear
 That gushes all unbidden to their eye,
 And sanctifies their service.—On their heads
 Thy blessing, Lord of Bounty!—

—But, of all,
 All thy choice comforts in this drear distress,
 God of our first young love! Thine is the Wife,
 Who with assiduous care, from night to morn,
 From morn to night, watches my every need;
 And, as in brightest days of peace and joy,
 Smiles on my anguish, while her own poor breast
 Is full almost to bursting! Prostrate, Lord,
 Before thy footstool—Thou, whose highest style
 On earth, in heaven, is love!—Thou, who hast
 Thro' human hearts the tender charities, [breath'd
 The social fond affections which unite
 In bonds of sweetest amity those hearts,

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And guide to every good!—Thou, whose kind eye
 Complacent must behold the rich, ripe fruit,
 Mature and mellow'd on the generous stock
 Of thy own careful planting!—Low on earth,
 And mingled with my native dust, I cry;
 With all the Husband's anxious fondness cry;
 With all the friend's solicitude and truth;
 With all the teacher's fervour,—“ God of Love,
 “ Vouchsafe thy choicest comforts on her head!
 “ Be thine my fate's decision: To thy will
 “ With angel-resignation, lo! we bend!”

But hark! what sound, wounding the night's
 dull ear,

Bursts sudden on my sense, and makes more horrible
 These midnight horrors?—'Tis the solemn bell,
 Alarm to the prisoners of death*!

Hark! what a groan, responsive from the cells
 Of condemnation, calls upon my heart,
 My thrilling heart, for intercession strong,
 And pleadings in the sufferer's behalf—
 My fellow-sufferers, and my fellow-men!

Cease then awhile the strain, my plaintive soul,
 And veil thy face of sorrow! Lonely hours
 Soon will return thee to thy midnight task,
 For much remains to sing; sad themes, unsung,
 As deem'd perchance too mournful;—yet, what else
 Than themes like these can suit a muse like mine!
 —And might it be, that while ingenuous woe
 Bleeds thro' my verse; while the succeeding page
 Weaving

* This alludes to a very striking and awful circumstance. The bellman of St. Sepulchre's, near the prison, is by long and pious custom appointed to announce at midnight to the condemned criminals in their cells, *That the hour of their departure is at hand!*

Weaving with my sad story the detail
 Of crimes, of punishments, of prisons drear,
 Of present life and future,—sad discourse
 And serious shall contain ; Oh might it be,
 That human hearts may listen and improve ;
 Oh might it be, that benefit to souls
 Flow from the weeping tablet : though the Man
 In torture die,—the Painter shall rejoice !

Sunday, March 2. 1777.

END OF THE FIRST WEEK.

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THOUGHTS IN PRISON.

SUNDAY, *March 2. 1777.*

WEEK THE SECOND.

THE RETROSPECT.

OH, not that thou goest hence—sweet drooping
flower,
Surcharg'd with Sorrow's dew!—Not that thou
quitt'st

This pent and feverish gloom, which beams with
light,

With health, with comfort, by thy presence cheer'd,
Companion of my life, and of my woes

Blest soother! Not that thou goest hence to drink

A purer air, and gather from the breath

Of balmy spring new succour, to recruit

Thy wanning health, and aid thee to sustain,

With more than manly fortitude, thy own

And my afflictive trials! Not that here,

Amidst the glories of this genial day,

Immur'd, through iron bars I peep at Heaven

With dim, lack-lustre eye!—Oh, 'tis not this

That drives the poison'd point of torturous thought

Deep to my spring of life! It is not this

That prostrate lays me weeping in the dust,

And draws in sobs the life-blood from my heart!

Well could I bear thy absence: well, full well;

E

Tho'

Tho' angel-comforts in thy converse smile,
 And make my dungeon Paradise ! Full well
 Could I sustain thro' iron bars to view
 The golden Sun, in bridegroom-majesty
 Taking benignant nature to his love,
 And decking her with bounties ! Well, very well
 Could I forego the delicate delight
 Of tracing nature's germens as they bud ;
 Of viewing spring's first children as they rise
 In innocent sweetness, or beneath the thorn
 In rural privacy ; or on gay parterre
 More artful, less enchanting !—Well, very well
 Could I forego to listen,—in this house
 Of unremitted din,—and nought complain ;
 To listen as I oft have flood with thee
 Listening in fond endearment to the voice
 Of stock-dove, thro' the silence of the wood
 Hoarse murmuring !—Well, oh could I forego
 These innocent, tho' exquisite delights,
 Still new, and to my bosom still attun'd
 In moral, mental melody !—Sweet Spring !
 Well could I bear this sad exile from Thee,
 Nor drop one tear reluctant ; for my soul,
 Strong to superior feelings, soars aloft
 To eminence of misery !—Confin'd
 On this blest day—the Sabbath of my God !
 —Not from his House alone, not from the power
 Of joyful worship with assembling crowds *,
 But from the labours once so amply mine,
 The labours of his love. Now, laid aside,
 Cover'd my head with ignominious dust,
 My voice is stopp'd ! and had I e'en the power,

Strong

* See Psalm lxxiv.

Strong shame, and stronger grief would to that voice
 Forbid all utterance !—Ah, thrice hapless voice,
 By Heaven's own finger all indulgent tun'd
 To touch the heart, and win th' attentive soul
 To love of truth divine, how useless now,
 How dissonant, unstrung !—Like Salem's harps,
 Once fraught with richest harmony of praise,
 Hung in sad silence by Euphrates' stream,
 Upon the mournful willows ! There they wept,
 Thy captive people wept, O God !—when thought
 To bitter memory recall'd the songs,
 The dulcet songs of Sion ! Oh blest songs,
 Transporting chorus of united hearts,
 In cheerful music mounting to the praise
 Of Sion's King of Glory !—Oh the joy
 Transcendant, of petitions wing'd aloft
 With fervour irresistible from throngs
 Assembled in thy earthly courts, dread King
 Of all-dependant nature !—looking up
 For all to Thee, as do the servants eyes
 Up to their fostering Master ! Joy of joys,
 Amidst such throng'd assemblies to stand forth,
 To blow the Silver Trumpet of thy Grace ;
 The gladsome year of jubilee to proclaim,
 And offer to the aching sinner's heart
 Redemption's healing mercies ! And methinks
 (—Indulge the pleasing reverie, my soul !
 The waking dream, which in oblivion sweet
 Lulls thy o'erlabour'd sense !) methinks convey'd
 To Ham's lov'd shades,—dear favourite shades,
 by peace
 And pure religion sanctify'd,—I hear
 The tuneful bells their hallow'd message sound
 To Christian hearts symphonious ! Circling time

Once more hath happily brought round the day
Which calls us to the temple of our God :
Then let us haste, in decent neatness clad,
My cheerful little household, to his courts,
So lov'd, so truly honour'd ! There we'll mix
In meek, ingenuous deprecation's cry ;
There we'll unite in full thanksgiving's choir,
And all the rich melodiousness of praise.

I feel, I feel the rapture ! David's harp
Concordant with a thousand voices sounds :
Prayer mounts exulting : Man ascends the skies
On wings of angel-fervour ! Holy writ
Or speaks the wonders of Jehovah's power,
Or tells in more than mortal majesty,
The greater wonders of his love to man !
Proofs of that love, see where the mystic signs,
High emblems of unutterable grace,
Confirm to man the zeal of Heaven to save,
And call to gratitude's best office !

—————Wife

In all thy sacred institutions, Lord,
Thy Sabbaths with peculiar wisdom shine ;
First and high argument, creation done,
Of thy benign solicitude for man,
Thy chiefest, favourite creature. Time is thine ;
How just to claim a part, who giv'st the whole !
But oh, how gracious, to assign that part
To man's supreme behoof, his soul's best good ;
His mortal and his mental benefit ;
His body's genial comfort ! Savage else,
Untaught, undisciplin'd, in shaggy pride
He'd rovd the wild, amidst the brutes a brute
Ferocious ; to the soft civilities
Of cultivated life, Religion, Truth,

A bar-

A barbarous stranger. To thy Sabbaths then
 All hail, wise Legislator ! 'Tis to these
 We owe at once the memory of thy works,
 Thy mighty works of nature and of grace ;—
 We owe divine religion : and to these
 The decent comeliness of social life.

Revere, ye earthly magistrates, who wield
 The sword of Heaven,—the wisdom of Heaven's
 plan,

And sanctify the Sabbath of your God !
 Religion's all : With that or stands or falls
 Your country's weal ! but where shall she obtain,
 —Religion, fainted pilgrim,—shelter safe
 Or honourable greeting ;—thro' the land,
 If led by high and low, in giddy dance,
 Mad profanation on the sacred day
 Of God's appointed rest, her revel-rout
 Insulting heads, and leaves the temple void ?
 —Oh, my lov'd country ! oh, ye thoughtless great,
 Intoxicate with draughts, that opium-like
 For transient moments stupify the mind
 To wake in horrors, and confusion wild !—

But soft, and know thyself ! 'Tis not for thee,
 Poor destitute ! thus groveling in the dust
 Of self-annihilation, to assume
 The Censor's office, and reprove mankind.
 Ah me,—thy day of duty is declined !
 Thou rather, to the quick probe thine own wounds,
 And plead for mercy at the judgment-seat,
 Where conscience smites thee for th' offence de-
 plor'd.

Yet not presumptuous deem it, Arbitrer
 Of human thoughts, that thro' the long, long gloom
 Of multiply'd transgressions, I behold

Complacent smiling on my sickening soul,
 " Delight in thy lov'd Sabbaths !" Well Thou
 know'st—

Forthou knowest all things,—that the cheerful sound
 Of that blest day's return, for circling weeks,
 For months, for years, for more than thrice seven
 years,

Was music to my heart ! My feet rejoic'd
 To bear me to thy temples, haply fraught
 With Comfort's tidings ; with thy gospel's truth,
 The gospel of thy peace ! Oh, well Thou know'st,
 Who knowest all things, with what welcome toil,
 What pleasing assiduity I search'd
 Thy heavenly word, to learn thy heavenly will ;
 That faithful I might minister its truth,
 And of the high commission nought kept back
 From the great congregation * ! Well thou know'st,
 —Sole, sacred Witness of my private hours,—
 How copiously I bath'd with pleading tears,
 How earnestly in prayer consign'd to Thee
 The humble efforts of my trembling pen ;
 My best, weak efforts in my Master's cause ;
 Weak as the feather 'gainst the giant's shield,
 Light as the gosmer floating on the wind,
 Without thy aid omnipotent ! Thou know'st
 How, anxious to improve in every grace,
 That best to man's attention might commend
 Th' important message, studious I apply'd
 My feeble talents to the holy art
 Of 'suasive elocution ; emulous
 Of every acquisition which might clothe
 In purest dignity the purest work,

The

* Psalm xl. ver. 10.

The first, the highest office man can bear,
 "The Messenger of God!" And well Thou know'st,
 —For all the work, as all the praise is Thine—
 What sweet success accompanied the toil:
 What harvests bless'd the seed-time! Well thou
 know'st

With what triumphant gladness my rapt soul
 Wrought in the vineyard! how it thankful bore
 The noon-day's heat, the evening's chilly frost,
 Exulting in its much-lov'd Master's cause
 To spend, and to be spent! and bring it home
 From triple labours of the well-toil'd day,
 A body by fatigue o'erborne; a mind
 Replete with glad emotions to its God!

Ah, my lov'd household! ah, my little round
 Of social friends! well do you bear in mind
 Those pleasing evenings, when, on my return,
 Much-wish'd return—serenity the mild,
 And cheerfulness the innocent, with me
 Enter'd the happy dwelling! Thou, my Ernest,
 Ingenuous youth! whose early spring bespoke
 Thy summer, as it is, with richest crops
 Luxuriant waving; gentle youth, canst thou
 Those welcome hours forget? or thou—oh thou!
 —How shall I utter from my beating heart
 Thy name, so musical, so heavenly sweet
 Once to these ears distracted!—Stanhope, say,
 Canst thou forget those hours, when, cloth'd in
 smiles

Of fond respect, thou and thy friend have strove
 Whose little hands should readiest supply
 My willing wants; officious in your zeal
 To make the Sabbath evenings, like the day,

A scene

A scene of sweet composure to my soul * !
 Oh happy Sabbaths !—Oh my soul's delight !
 Oh days of matchless mercy ! matchless praise !
 Gone, gone, for ever gone ! How dreadful spent,
 Useless, in tears, and groans, and bitter woe,
 In this wild place of horrors † !—Oh, return,
 Ye happy Sabbaths !—or to that lov'd realm
 Dismiss me, Father of compassions, where
 Reigns one eternal Sabbath ! Tho' my voice,
 Feeble at best, be damp'd, and cannot soar
 To strains sublime, beneath the sorrowing sense
 Of base ingratitude to thee, my God,
 My Father, Benefactor, Saviour, Friend,—
 Yet in that realm of rest 'twill quickly catch
 Congenial harmony ! 'twill quickly rise
 Even from humility's weak, trembling touch ;
 Rise with the glowing Seraph in the choir,
 And strive to be the loudest in thy praise.

Too soaring thought ! that in a moment sunk
 By sad reflection and convicting guilt,
 Falls prostrate on the earth.—So, pois'd in air,
 And warbling his wild notes about the clouds,
 Almost beyond the ken of human sight ;
 Clapp'd to his side his plummy steerage, down
 Drops—instantaneous drops the silent lark !

—How

* Good Friday, Easter, &c. once so peculiarly happy—
 yet how past here !—What a sad want of the spirit of re-
 formation !

† Boethius has a reflection highly applicable to the sense
 of our Author:—"Nec inficiari possum prosperitatis meæ
 velocissimum cursum. Sed hoc est, quod recolentem me ve-
 hementius coquit. Nam in omni adversitate fortunæ, infeli-
 cissimum genus est infortunii, fuisse felicem." *De Consol.*
 L. 2. Prof. 4.

How shall I mount to Heaven? how join the
choir

Celestial of bright Seraphim? deprest
Beneath the burden of a thousand sins,
On what blest dove-like wing shall I arise,
And fly to the wish'd rest?

—Of counsel free,
Some to my aching heart, with kind intent,
Offer the poisonous balsam of desert;
“ Bid me take comfort from the cheering view
“ Of deeds benevolent, and active life
“ Spent for the weal of others!” Syren-songs,
Soon hush'd by howlings of severe reproach,
Unfeeling, uncompassionate, and rude,
Which o'er my body, panting on the earth,
With wounds incurable, insulting, whirls
Her iron scourge: accumulates each ill
That can to man's best fame damnation add:
Spies not one mark of white throughout my life;
And, groaning o'er my anguish to despair,
As my soul, sad resource, indignant points!

But not from you,—ah cruel, callous foes,
Thus to exult and press a fallen man!—
Nor even from you, tho' kind, mistaken friends,
Admit we counsel here. Too deep the stake,
Too awful the inquiry—how the soul
May smile at death, and meet its God in peace—
To rest the answer on uncertain man!
Alike above your friendship or your hate,
Here, here I tour triumphant, and behold
At once confirmed security and joy,
Beyond the reach of mortal hand to shake,
Or for a moment cloud.—Hail, bleeding Love!
In thy humiliation deep and dread,

Divine

Divine Philanthropist, my ransom'd soul
Beholds its triumph, and avows its cure !
Its perfect, free salvation, knows or feels
No merit, no dependence, but thy faith,
Thy hope and love consummate ! All abjures ;
Casts all,—each care, each burden, at the foot
Of thy victorious cross : is heart and life
One wish, one word uniting—ever may
That wish and word in me, blest Lord, unite !—
“ Oh, ever may in me Thy will be done ! ”

Firm and unshaken, as old Sion's Hill,
Remains this sure foundation : who on Christ,
The Corner-Stone, build faithful, build secure,
Eternity is theirs. Then talk no more,
Ye airy, vague, fantastic reasoners,
Of the light stubble, crackling in the fire
Of God's investigation ; of the chaff
Dispers'd, and floating 'fore the slightest wind,—
The chaff of human merit ! gracious God !
What pride, what contradiction in the term !
Shall man, vain man, drest in a little power
Deriv'd from Nature's Author ; and that power,
Holding, an humble tenant, at the will
Of him who freely gave it ; His high will,
The dread Supreme Disposer, shall poor man,
A beggar indigent and vile,—enrich'd
With every precious faculty of soul,
Of reason, intellect ; with every gift
Of animal life luxuriant—from the store
Of unexhausted bounty ; shall he turn
That bounty to abuse ; lavish defy
The Giver with his gifts,—a rebel base !
And yet, presumptuous, arrogant, deceiv'd,
Assume a pride for actions not his own,

Or boast of merit, when his all's for God,
 And he that all has squander'd ! Purest saints,
 Brightest archangels, in the choir of heaven,
 Fulfilling all complete his holy will,
 Who plac'd them high in glory as they stand,
 Fulfil but duty ! nay, as owing more
 From love's supreme distinction, readier veil
 Their radiant faces with their golden plumes,
 And fall more humbled 'fore the throne they hymn
 With gratitude superior. Could bold pride
 One moment whisper to their lucid souls
 Desert's intolerable folly,—down,
 Like Lucifer, the Morning-star, they'd fall
 From their bright state obscur'd ! Then, proud,
 poor worm,

Conceiv'd in sins, offending from thy youth,
 In every point transgressor of the law
 Of righteousness : of merit towards God,
 Dream, if thou canst : or, madman if thou art,
 Stand on that plea for heav'n,—and be undone !

Blest be thy tender mercy, God of Grace !
 That 'midst the terrors of this trying hour,
 When in this midnight, lonely, prison gloom,
 My inmost soul hangs naked to thy view ;
 When, undissembled in the search, I fain
 Would know, explore, and balance every thought
 (For oh, I see Eternity's dread gates
 Expand before me, soon perhaps to close !)—
 Blest be thy mercy, that, subdued to thee,
 Each lofty vain imagination bows ;
 Each high idea humbled in the dust,
 Of self-sufficient righteousness my soul
 Disclaims, abhors, with reprobation full,
 The slightest apprehension !—Worthless, Lord,
 Even

Even of the meanest crumb beneath thy board.

Blest be thy mercy, that, so far from due,
 I own thy bounties, manifold and rich,
 Upon my soul have laid a debt so deep,
 That I can never pay!—And oh! I feel
 Compunction inexpressible, to think
 How I have us'd those bounties! sackcloth-clad,
 And cover'd o'er with ashes, I deplore
 My utter worthlessness; and, trembling, own
 Thy wrath and just displeasure well might sink
 In deeper floods than these, that o'er my head
 Roar horrible,—in fiery floods of woe,
 That know nor end nor respite! but, my God,
 Blest be thy mercy ever! Thou'lt not left
 My soul to Desperation's dark dismay!
 On Calvary's Hill my mourning eye discerns,
 With faith's clear view, that Spectacle which wipes
 Each tear away, and bids the heart exult!
 There hangs the Love of God! There hangs of man
 The Ransom; there the Merit; there the Cure
 Of human grief—The Way, the Truth, the Life!

Oh Thou, for sin burnt-sacrifice complete!
 Oh Thou, of holy life th' exemplar bright!
 Perfection's lucid mirror! while to Thee
 Repentance scarce dare lift her flowing eyes,
 Though in his strong arms manly Faith supports
 The self-convicted mourner!—Let not love,
 Source of thy matchless mercies, aught delay,
 Like Mary, with Humility's meek hand
 Her precious box of costly Nard to pour
 On thy dear feet, diffusing through the house
 The odour of her unguents! Let not Love,
 Looking with Gratitude's full eye to Thee,
 Cease with the hallow'd fragrance of her works

To

To cheer thy lowliest members ; to refresh
 Thee in thy saints afflicted ! Let not Love,
 Cease with each spiritual grace, each temper mild,
 Fruits of the Holy Spirit,—to enrich,
 To fill, perfume, and sanctify the soul
 Assimilate to Thee, sweet Jesu ! Thee
 That soul's immortal habitant. How blest,
 How beyond value rich the privilege,
 To welcome such a Guest ! how doubly blest
 With such a signature,—the royal stamp
 Of thy resemblance, Prince of Righteousness,
 Of Mercy, Peace, and Truth ! Oh more and more
 Transform me to that Image ! More and more
 Thou New Creation's Author, form complete
 In me the birth divine ; the heavenly mind,
 The love consummate,—all-performing love,
 Which dwelt in Thee, its Pattern and its Source ;
 And is to man, happy regenerate man,
 Heaven's surest foretaste, and its earnest too.

The thought delights and cheers, though not
 elates :

Through pensive Meditation's fable gloom
 It darts a ray of soft, well-temper'd light,
 A kind of lunar radiance on my soul,
 Gentle, not dazzling ! Thou who knowest all,
 Know'st well, thrice gracious Master ! that my heart
 Attun'd to thy dear love, howe'er seduc'd
 By worldly adulation from its vows,
 And for a few contemptible, contemn'd
 Unhappy moments faithless ; well thou know'st
 That heart ne'er knew true peace but in thy love :
 That heart hath in thy love known thorough peace !
 Hath frequent panted for that love's full growth ;
 And sought occasions to display its warmth

By deeds of kindness, mild humanity,
And pitying mercy to its fellow men!

And thou hast blest me! and I will rejoice
That thou hast blest me! thou hast giv'n my soul
The Luxury of Luxuries to wipe
The tear from many an eye; to stop the groan
At many an aching heart. And Thou wilt wipe
The tears from mine, and Thou the groan repress:
And Thou,—for oh, this beating heart is thine,
Fram'd by thy Hand to pity's quickest touch,—
Thou wilt forgive the sinner; and bestow
Mercy, sweet mercy! which, inspir'd by Thee,
He never had the power, and ne'er the will,
To hold from others where he could bestow!

Shall he not then rest happily secure
Of mercy, thrice blest mercy from mankind?
Where rests it?—Resignation's meek-eyed power
Sustain me still; Composure still be mine:
Where rests it?—Oh mysterious Providence!
Silence the wild idea:—I have found
No mercy yet; no mild humanity:
With cruel unrelenting rigour torn,
And, lost in prison, wild to all below!

So from his daily toil, returning late
O'er Grison's rugged mountains, clad in snow,
The peasant with astonish'd eyes beholds
A gaunt wolf, from the pine-grove howling rush!
Chill horror stiffens him, alike to fly
Unable, to resist; the monster feeds
Blood-happy, growling, on his quivering heart!
Meanwhile light blazes in his lonely cot
The crackling hearth; his careful wife prepares
Her humble cates; and through the letticed light
His little ones, expecting his return,

Peep,

Peep, anxious ! Ah, poor victim, he nor hearth
Bright blazing, nor the housewife's humble cates,
Nor much-lov'd children henceforth more shall see !

But soft : 'Tis calm reflection's midnight hour ;
'Tis the soul's solemn inquest. Broods a thought
Resentful in thy bosom ? Art thou yet,
Penitent Pilgrim, on earth's utmost bourn,
And candidate for Heaven,—art thou yet
In love imperfect ? and has malice place,
With dark revenge, and unforgiving hate,
Hell's blackest offspring ?—Glory to my God !
With triumph let me sing, and close my strain.

Abhorrent ever from my earliest youth
Of these detested passions in this hour,
This trying hour of keen oppressive grief,
My soul superior rises ; nor of these
Malevolent, a touch, the slightest touch
Feels, or shall ever harbour ! Tho' it feels
In all their amplitude, with all their weight,
Ungentlest treatment, and a load of woe,
Heavy as that which fabling poets lay
On proud Enceladus ! Tho' life be drawn
By Cruelty's fierce hand down to the lees,
Yet can my heart with all the truth of prayer,
With all the fervour of sincere desire,
Looking at Thee, thou love of God and man ;
Yet can my heart in life or death implore,
“ Father, forgive them as Thou pitiest me ! ”

O where's the wonder, when thy cross is seen !
Oh, where's the wonder when thy voice is heard ;
Harmonious intercession ! Son of God !
Oh, where's the wonder—or the merit where,
Or what's the task to love-attuned souls—
Poor fellow-creatures pitying, to implore

Forgiveness for them ? Oh forgive my foes !
 Best friends, perchance, for they may bring to
 Thee !

—Complete forgiveness on them, God of grace !
 Complete forgiveness, in the dreadful hour,
 When most they need forgiveness ! And oh ! such
 As in that dreadful hour, my poor heart wants,
 And trusts, great Father, to receive from Thee,
 Such full forgiveness grant ;—and my glad soul
 Shall fold them then, my brethren, in thy house !

Thus do I sooth, and while away with song
 My lonely hours, in drear confinement past,
 Like thee, oh gallant Raleigh !—or like thee,
 My hapless ancestor, fam'd Overbury !
 But Oh, in this how different is our fate !
 Thou to a vengeful woman's subtle wiles
 A hapless victim fall'st ; while my deep gloom,
 Brighten'd by female virtue and the light
 Of conjugal affection—leads me oft,
 Like the poor prison'd linnet, to forget
 Freedom, and tuneful friends, and ruffet heath,
 Vocal with native melody ; to swell
 The feeble throat, and chant the lowly strain ;
 As in the season, when from spray to spray
 Flew liberty on light elastic wing,
 She flies no more :—Be mute my plaintive lyre !

March 15. 1777.

END OF THE SECOND WEEK.

THOUGHTS IN PRISON.

MARCH 18. 1777.

WEEK THE THIRD.

PUBLIC PUNISHMENT.

VAIN are thy generous efforts, worthy Bull *,
Thy kind compassion's vain ! The hour is
come :

Stern fate demands compliance : I must pass
Thro' various deaths, keen torturing, to arrive
At that my heart so fervently implores ;
Yet fruitless. Ah ! why hides he his fell front
From woe, from wretchedness, that with glad smiles
Would welcome his approach ; and tyrant-like,
Delights to dash the jocund roseate cup
From the full hand of gaudy luxury
And unsuspecting ease ! Far worse than death
That prison's entrance, whose idea chills
With freezing horror all my curdling blood ;
Whose very name, stamping with infamy,
Makes my soul frightened start, in frenzy whirl'd,
And verging near to madness ! See, they ope
Their iron jaws ! See the vast gates expand,

F 3

Gate

* Frederick Bull, Esq. Alderman of London ; to whose kindness and humanity the Author has expressed the highest obligations.

Gate after gate—and in an instant twang,
 Clos'd by their growling keepers ; when again,
 Mysterious powers !—oh when to open on me ?
 Mercy, sweet Heaven, support my faltering steps,
 Support my sickening heart ! My full eyes swim :
 O'er all my frame distills a cold damp sweat.
 Hark—what a rattling din ! on every side
 The congregated chains-clank frigid : Throngs
 Tumultuous press around, to view, to gaze
 Upon the wretched stranger ; scarce believ'd
 Other than visitor within such walls,
 With mercy and with freedom in his hands.
 Alas, how chang'd ! Sons of confinement, see
 No pitying deliverer, but a wretch
 O'erwhelm'd with misery, more hapless far
 Than the most hapless 'mongst ye ; loaded hard
 With guilt's oppressive irons ! His are chains
 No time can loosen, and no hand unbind :
 Fetters which gore the soul. Oh horror, horror !
 Ye massive bolts, give way : ye swollen doors,
 Ah, open quick, and from this clamorous rout,
 Close in my dismal, lone, allotted room
 Shroud me ;—for ever shroud from human sight,
 And make it, if 'tis possible, my grave !

How truly welcome, then ! Then would I greet
 With hallow'd joy the drear, but blest abode ;
 And deem it far the happiest I have known ;
 The best I e'er inhabited. But alas !
 There's no such mercy for me. I must run
 Misery's extremest round ; and this must be
 A while my living grave ; the doleful tomb,
 Sad sounding with my unremitted groan,
 And moisten'd with the bitterness of tears !

Ah, mournful dwelling ! destin'd ne'er to see

The

The human face divine in placid smiles,
 And innocent gladness cloth'd : destin'd to hear
 No sounds of genial heart-reviving joy !
 The sons of sorrows only are thy guests,
 And thine the only music of their sighs,
 Thick sobbing from the tempest of their breasts !
 Ah, mournful dwelling ! never hast thou seen,
 Amidst the numerous wretched ones immur'd
 Within thy stone-girt compass, wretch so sunk,
 So lost, so ruin'd, as the man who falls
 Thus in deep anguish, on thy ruthless floor,
 And bathes it with the torrent of his tears.

And can it be ? or is it all a dream ?

A vapour of the mind ?—I scarce believe
 Myself awake or acting. Sudden thus
 Am I—so compass'd round with comforts late,
 Health, freedom, peace, torn, torn from all and lost !
 A prisoner in—Impossible !—I sleep !
 'Tis fancy's coinage ! 'tis a dream's delusion !

Vain dream ! vain fancy ! Quickly I am rous'd
 To all the dire reality's distress :
 I tremble, start, and feel myself awake,
 Dreadfully awake to all my woes ; and roll
 From wave to wave on Sorrow's ocean tost !

Oh for a moment's pause,—a moment's rest,
 To calm my hurried spirits ! to recal
 Reflection's staggering pilot to the helm,
 And still the maddening whirlwind in my soul !
 —It cannot be ! The din increases round :
 Rough voices rage discordant ; dreadful shrieks !
 Hoarse imprecations dare the Thunderer's ire,
 And call down swift damnation ! thousand chains
 In dismal notes clink, mirthful ! Roaring bursts
 Of loud obstreperous laughter and strange choirs

Of

Of gutturals, dissonant and rueful, vex
 E'en the dull ear of Midnight ! Neither rest,
 Nor peaceful calm, nor silence of the mind,
 Refreshment sweet, nor interval or pause
 From morn to eve, from eve to morn is found
 Amidst the surges of this troubled sea * !

So, from the Leman Lake th' impetuous Rhone
 His blue waves pushes rapid, and bears down
 (Furiate to meet Saone's pellucid stream,
 With roar tremendous thro' the craggy straits
 Of Alpine rocks) his freight of waters wild :
 Sill rushing in perturbed eddies on ;
 And still from hour to hour, from age to age
 In conflux vast and unremitting pours
 His boisterous flood to old Lugdunim's wall !

Oh my rack'd brain—oh my distracted heart !
 The tumult thickens : wild disorder grows
 More painfully confus'd !—And can it be ?
 Is this the mansion—this the house ordain'd
 For recollection's solemn purpose !—this
 The place from whence full many a sitting soul
 (The work of deep repentance—mighty work,
 Still, still to be perform'd) must mount to God,
 And give its dread account ! Is this the place
 Ordain'd

* It is but a just tribute to Mr. Akerman, the keeper of this dismal place, to observe, that all the evils here enumerated are the immediate consequences of promiscuous confinement, and no way chargeable to Mr. A.'s account. It is from the strictest observation, I am persuaded, that no man could do more in the present circumstances. His attention is great, and his kindness and humanity to those in sickness or affliction peculiarly pleasing. I can bear testimony to many signal instances, which I have remarked since my sad confinement.

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Ordain'd by justice, to confine a while
 The foe to civil order, and return
 Reform'd and moraliz'd to social life !
 This den of drear confusion, wild uproar,
 Of mingled riot and unblushing vice !
 This school of infamy ! from whence, improv'd
 In every hardy villany, returns
 More harden'd, more a foe to God and man,
 The miscreant, nurs'd in its infectious lap ;
 All cover'd with its pestilential spots,
 And breathing death and poison wheresoe'er
 He stalks contagious ! from the lion's den
 A lion more ferocious as confin'd !

Britons, while sailing in the golden barge
 Of giddy dissipation, on the stream,
 Smooth silver stream of gorgeous luxury,
 Boast gaily—and for ages may they boast,
 And truly ? for through ages we may trust
 'Twill interpose between our crimes and God,
 And turn away his just avenging scourge—
 “ The national Humanity ! ” Hither then,
 Ye son's of pity, and ye sons of thought !—
 Whether by public zeal and patriot love,
 Or by Compassion's gentle stirrings wrought,
 Oh hither come, and find sufficient scope
 For all the patriot's, all the Christian's search !
 Some great, some salutary plan to frame,
 Turning confinement's curses into good ;
 And, like the God who but rebukes to save,
 Extracting comfort from correction's stroke !

Why do we punish ? Why do penal laws
 Coercive, by tremendous sanctions bind
 Offending mortals—Justice on her throne
 Rigid on this hand to example points ;

More

More mild to reformation upon that :
—She balances, and finds no ends but these.

Crowd then, along with yonder revel-rout,
To exemplary punishment, and mark
The language of the multitude, obscene,
Wild, blasphemous, and cruel ! Tent their looks
Of madding, drunken, thoughtless, ruthless gaze,
Or giddy curiosity and vain !
Their deeds still more emphatic, note ; and see
By the sad spectacle unimpress'd, they dare
Even in the eye of death, what to their doom
Brought their expiring fellows ! Learn we hence,
How to example's salutary end
Our justice sagely ministers ! But one,—
Should there be one—thrice hapless,—of a mind
By guilt unhardened, and above the throng
Of desperate miscreants, thro' repeated crimes
In stupor lull'd, and lost to every sense ;—
Ah me, the sad reverse !—should there be one
Of generous feelings ; whom remorseless fate,
Pallid necessity, or chill distress,
The family's urgent call, or just demand
Of honest creditor,—(solicitudes
To reckless, pamper'd worldlings all unknown)
Should there be one, whose trembling, frightened hand
Causes like these in temporary guilt,
Abhorrent to his inmost soul, have plung'd,
And made obnoxious to the rigid law !
Sentenc'd to pay,—and, wearied with its weight,
Well-pleas'd to pay with life that law's demand,
Awful dispensers of strict justice, say,
Would ye have more than life ? or, in an age,
A country, where humanity reverts
At torture's bare idea, would you tear

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Worse than on racking wheels a soul like this,
 And make him of the stupid crowd a gaze
 For lingering hours?—drag him along to death
 An useless spectacle; and more than slay
 Your living victim?—Death is your demand:
 Death your law's sentence: then this life is yours.
 Take the just forfeit; you can claim no more!

Foe to my infidelity,—and griev'd
 That he avows not, from the Christian source,
 The first great Christian duty, which so well,
 So forcibly he paints!—Yet let me greet
 With heart-felt gratulations thy warm zeal,
 Successful in that sacred duty's cause,
 The cause of our humanity, Voltaire!
 Torture's vile agents trembling at thy pen:
 Intolerance and persecution gnash
 Their teeth, despairing at the lucid rays
 Of truth all-prevalent, beaming from thy page.
 The rack, the wheel, the dungeon, and the flame,
 In happier Europe useless and unknown,
 Shall soon,—oh speed the hour, Compassion's God,
 Be seen no more; or seen as prodigies,
 Scarce credited, of Gothic barbarous times.

Ah, gallant France, for milder manners fam'd,
 How wrung it my sad soul, to view expos'd
 On instruments of torture—mangled limbs
 And bleeding carcases, beside thy roads,
 Thy beauteous woods and avenues! Fam'd works,
 And worthy well the grandeur of old Rome!

We too, who boast of gentler laws, reform'd
 And civiliz'd by liberty's kind hand:
 Of mercy boast, and mildest punishments:
 Yet punishments of torture exquisite
 And idle;—painful, ruinous parade!

We,

We, too, with Europe humaniz'd, shall drop
 The barbarous severity of death,
 Example's bane, not profit; shall abridge
 The savage base ovation; shall assign
 The wretch, whose life is forfeit to the laws,
 With all the silent dignity of woe,
 With all the mournful majesty of death,
 Retir'd and solemn, to his awful fate!
 Shall to the dreadful moment, moment still
 To souls best fitted, give distinction due;
 Teach the well-order'd sufferer to depart
 With each impression serious; nor insult
 With clamorous crowds and exultations base
 A soul, a fellow soul, which stands prepar'd
 On time's dread verge to take its wondrous flight,
 To realms of immortality! Yes, the day
 —I joy in the idea,—will arrive,
 When Britons philanthropic shall reject
 The cruel custom, to the sufferer cruel,
 Useless and baneful to the gaping crowd!
 The day will come, when life, the dearest price
 Man can pay down, sufficient forfeit deem'd
 For guilty man's transgression of the law,
 Shall be paid down, as meet for such a price
 Respectful, sad; with reverence to a soul's
 Departure hence; with reverence to the soul's
 And body's separation, much-lov'd friends!
 Without a torture to augment its loss,
 Without an insult to molest its calm;
 To the demanded debt no fell account
 Of curious, hissing ignominy annex'd:
 Anguish, beyond the bitterest torture keen;
 Unparallel'd in realms where bigotry
 Gives to the furious sons of Dominic

Her

Her fable flag, and marks their way with blood.

Hail, milder sons of Athens! civiliz'd
By arts ingenious, by the 'suasive power
Of humanizing science: well ye thought,
Like you may Britons think, that 'twas enough,
The sentence pass'd, a Socrates should die!
The sage, obedient to the law's decree,
Took from the weeping executioner
The draught, resign'd: amidst his sorrowing friends,
Full of immortal hopes, convers'd sublime;
And, half in Heaven—compos'd himself, and died!

Oh envy'd fate! oh happiness supreme!
So let me die; so, 'midst my weeping friends,
Resign my life! I ask not the delay
Ev'n of a moment. Law, thoud'st have thy due!
Nor thou, nor justice, can have more to claim.

But equal laws, on truth and reason built,
Look to humanity with lenient eye,
And temper rigid justice with the claims
Of heaven-descended mercy! to condemn
Sorrowing and slow; while studious to correct,
Like man's all-gracious parent, with the view
Benign and laudable, of moral good,
And reformation perfect. Hither then,
Ye sons of sympathy, of wisdom; friends
To order, to compassion, to the state,
And to your fellow-beings; hither come,
To this wild realm of uproar! hither haste,
And see the reformation, see the good
Wrought by confinement in a den like this!

View, with unblushing front, undaunted heart,
The callous harlot in the open day
Administer her poisons 'midst a rout
Scarcely less bold or poison'd than herself!

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View, and with eyes that will not hold the tear
 In gentle pity gushing for such griefs,—
 View, the young wretch, as yet unfledg'd in vice,
 Just shackled here, and by the veteran throng,
 In every infamy and every crime
 Grey and insulting, quickly taught to dare,
 Harden'd like them in guilt's opprobrious school;
 Each bashful sentiment, incipient grace,
 Each yet remorseful thought of right and wrong
 Murder'd and buried in his darken'd heart!—
 Hear how these veterans clank,—ev'n jovial clank
 —Such is obduracy and vice,—their chains*!
 Hear, how with curses hoarse and vauntings bold,
 Each spirits up, encourages and dares
 His desperate fellow to more desperate proofs
 Of future hardy enterprise; to plans
 Of death and ruin! Not exulting more
 Heroes or chiefs for noble acts renown'd,
 Holding high converse, mutually relate
 Gallant achievements worthy, than the sons
 Of plunder and of rapine here recount
 On peaceful life their devastations wild,
 Their dangers, hair-breadth 'scapes, atrocious feats,
 Confederate, and confederating still
 In schemes of deathful horror! Who, surpris'd,
 Can such effects contemplate, upon minds

Estrang'd

* This circumstance is slightly mentioned before, and alludes to a fact equally singular and disgusting. The rattling of their fetters is frequently, and in a wanton manner, practised amongst some of the worst offenders; as if an amusement, or to show their insensibility to shame. How shocking to see human nature thus in ruins! Here it is emphatically so, worse than in bedlam, as Madness with reason is more dreadful than without it.

Estrang'd to good ; fermenting on the lees
 Of pregnant ill ; associate and combin'd
 In intercourse infernal, restless, dire ;
 And goading constant each to other's thoughts
 To deeds of desperation from the tale
 Of vaunted infamy oft told : sad fruit
 Of the mind's vacancy ! and to that mind
 Employment none is offer'd : not an hour
 To secret recollection is assign'd ;
 No seasonable sound instruction brought,
 Food for their thoughts, self-gnawing. Not the day
 To rest and duty dedicate, finds here
 Or rest or duty ; revel'd off, unmark'd ;
 Or like the others undistinguish'd, save
 By riot's roar, and self-consuming sloth !
 For useful occupation none is found,
 Benevolent to employ their listless hands,
 With indolence fatigued ! Thus every day
 Anew they gather Guilt's corrosive rust ;
 Each wretched day accumulates fresh ills ;
 And horribly advanc'd, flagitious grown
 From faulty, they go forth, tenfold of Hell,
 More the devoted children : to the state
 Tenfold more dangerous and envenom'd foes
 Than first they enter'd this improving school !
 So, cag'd and scanty fed, or taught to rage
 By taunting insults, more ferocious burst
 On man the tyger or hyæna race
 From fell confinement, and with hunger urg'd,
 Gnash their dire fangs, and drench themselves in
 blood.

But should the felon fierce, th' abandon'd train,
 Whose inroads on the human peace forbid,
 Almost forbid Compassion's mild regard ;

(Yet ah! what man with fellow-man can fall
 So low as not to claim soft pity's care)!
 Should these ought justify the rigid voice,
 Which to severe confinement's durance dooms
 Infalible the body and the soul
 To bitterest, surest ruin, shall we not
 With generous indignation execrate
 The cruel indiscriminating law,
 Which turns misfortune into guilt and curse,
 And with the felon harden'd in his crimes
 Ranks the poor hapless debtor?—Debt's not guilt:
 Alas! the worthiest may incur the stroke
 Of worldly infelicity! What man,
 How high foe'er he builds his earthly nest,
 Can claim security from fortune's change,
 Or boast him of to-morrow! Of the east
 Greatest and chief, lo! humbled in the dust,
 Sits Job, the sport of misery! Wealthiest late
 Of all blest Araby's most wealthy sons,
 He wants a potsherd now to scrape his wounds;
 He wants a bed to shrowd his tortur'd limbs,
 And only finds a dunghill! Creditor,
 Would'st thou add sorrows to this sorrowing man?
 Tear him from ev'n his dunghill, and confine
 'Midst recreant felons in a British jail!—
 Oh British inhumanity! Ye climes,
 Ye foreign climes—Be not the truth proclaim'd
 Within your streets, nor be it heard or told;
 Lest ye retort the cruelty we urge,
 And scorn the boasted mildness of our laws!

Blest be the hour,—amidst my depth of woe,
 Amidst this perturbation of my soul,
 God of my life, I can, I will exult!—
 Blest be the hour, that to my humble thought

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Thy spirit, sacred source of every good,
 Brought the sublime idea, to expand
 By charity, the angels grace divine,
 The rude, relentless, iron prison gates,
 And give the pining debtor to the world,
 His weeping family and humble home !
 Blest be the hour, when, heedful to my voice,
 Bearing the prisoners sad sighs to their ears,
 Thousands, with soft commiseration touch'd,
 Delighted to go forth, and visit glad
 Those prisoners in their woe, and set them free !

God of the merciful ! thou hast announc'd
 On mercy, thy first, dearest attribute,
 Chosen beatitude. Oh pour the dew,
 The fostering dew of mercy on their gifts,
 Their rich donations grateful ! May the prayers
 Of those enfranchis'd by their bounteous zeal
 Arise propitious for them ! and, when hers'd
 In death's cold arms this hapless frame shall lie,
 —The generous tear, perchance, not quite with-
 held ;—

When friendly memory to reflection brings
 My humble efforts and my mournful fate,
 On stable basis founded, may the work
 Diffuse its good through ages ! nor withhold
 Its rescuing influence, till the hour arrives
 When wants, and debts, and sickness are no more,
 And universal freedom blesteth all !

But, till that hour, on reformation's plan,
 Ye generous sons of sympathy, intent,
 Boldly stand forth. The cause may well demand,
 And justify full well your noblest zeal.
 Religion, policy, your country's good,
 And Christian pity for the souls of men,

To prisons call you ; call to cleanse away
The filth of these foul dens ; to purge from guilt,
And turn them to morality's fair school.

Nor deem impossible the great attempt,
Augæan tho' it seem ; yet not beyond
The strength of those, that, like Alcides, aim
High to be rank'd amidst the godlike few,
Who shine eternal on fame's amplest roll :
Honour'd with titles, far beyond the first
Which proudest monarchs of the globe can give ;
" Saviours and benefactors of mankind !"

Hail generous Hanway ! To thy noble plan,
Sage sympathetic *, let the muse subscribe,
Rejoicing ! In the kind pursuit, good luck
She wisheth thee, and honour. Could her strain
Embellish aught, or aught assist thy toils
Benevolent, 'twould cheer her lonely hours,
And make the dungeon smile. But toils like thine
Need no embellishment ; need not the aid
Of muse or feeble verse. Reason-approv'd
And charity-sustain'd, firm will they stand,
Under his sanction, who on mercy's works
E'er looks complacent ; and his sons on earth,
His chosen sons, with angel-zeal inspires
To plan and to support. And thine well-plann'd,
Shall be supported. Pity for thy brow,
With policy the sage, shall shortly twine
The garland, worthier far than that of oak,
So fam'd in ancient Rome—the meed of him
Who sav'd a single citizen. More bless'd
Religion mild, with gentle mercy join'd

Shall

* See Mr. Hanway's pamphlet, entitled, " Solitude in Imprisonment."

Shall hail thee—for the citizens, the souls
 Innumerable restor'd to God, the state,
 Themselves, and social life, by solitude,
 Devotion's parent, Recollection's nurse,
 Source of repentance true ; of the mind's wounds
 The deepest prober, but the safest cure * !
 Hail, sacred solitude ! These are thy works,
 True source of good supreme ! Thy blest effects
 Already on my mind's delighted eye
 Open beneficent. E'en now I view
 The revel-rout dispers'd ; each to his cell
 Admitted, silent ! The obstreperous cries
 Worse than infernal yells ! the clank of chains—
 Opprobrious chains, to man severe disgrace,
 Hush'd in calm order, vex the ears no more !
 While, in their stead, reflection's deep-drawn sighs,
 And prayers of humble penitence are heard,
 To heaven well-pleasing, in soft whispers round !
 No more, 'midst wanton idleness the hours
 Drag wearisome and slow : kind industry
 Gives wings and weight to every moment's speed ;
 Each minute marking with a golden thread
 Of moral profit. Harden'd vice no more
 Communicates its poison to the souls
 Of young associates, nor diffuses wide
 A pestilential taint. Still thought pervades
 The inmost heart : instruction aids the thought ;
 And blest religion with life-giving ray
 Shines on the mind sequester'd in its gloom :
 Disclosing glad the golden gates, thro' which
 Repentance, led by faith, may tread the courts
 Of peace and reformation ! Cheer'd and chang'd,
 —His happy days of quarantine perform'd—

Lo,

* Vide Taylor's Holy Living and Dying, part ii. p. 43.

Lo, from his solitude the captive comes
New-born, and opes once more his grateful eyes
On day, on life, on man, a fellow-man !

Hail sacred solitude ! from thee alone
Flow these high blessings. Nor be't deem'd severe,
Such sequestration ; destin'd to retrieve
The mental lapse ; and to its powers restore
The Heaven-born soul, encrusted with foul guilt :
'Tis tenderest mercy, 'tis humanity

Yearning with kindest softness : while her arm
From ruin plucks, effectuates the release,
And gives a ransom'd man to earth—to Heaven !

To the sick patient, struggling in the jaws
Of obstinate disease, e'er knew we yet
Grateful and pleasing from physician's hand
The rough, but salutary draught ?—For that
Do we withhold the draught ? and, falsely kind,
Hang sighing o'er our friend,—allow'd to toss
On the hot fever's bed, rave on and die,
Unmedicin'd, unreliev'd ? But sages, say,
Where is the medicine ? Who will prescribe a cure,
Or adequate to this corroding ill,
Or in its operation milder found ?

See on old Thames's waves indignant ride,
In fullen terror, yonder fable bark,
By state physicians lately launch'd, and hight
Justitia * ! Dove-eyed Pity, if thou canst
That bark ascend with me, and let us learn

How,

* The Author seems chiefly to have formed his idea of the mode of treating convicts on the Thames from a late pamphlet published by Dr. Smith : But we are informed that the evils here complained of have been already, in a great measure, and we trust will soon be wholly, removed.

How, temper'd with her sister Mercy, there
Reigns justice ; and, effective to the ill
Inveterate grown, her lenient aid supplies.

And rolls this bark on Thames's generous flood—
Flood that wafts freedom, wafts the high-born sons
Of gallant liberty to every land ?
See the chain'd Britons, fetter'd man by man !
See in the stiff'd hold—excluded whence
Man's common blessing, air ne'er freely breathes—
They mingle, crowded !—To our pamper'd steeds
Inferior how in lodging ! Tainted food
And poison'd fumes their life-springs stagnate rank,
They reel aloft for breath : their tottering limbs
Bend weak beneath the burden of a frame
Corrupted, burning ; with blue feverous spots
Contagious ; and unequal to the toil,
Urg'd by task-masters, vehement, severe,
On the chill sand bank !—by despair and pain
Worn down and wearied, some their being curse,
And die, devoting to destruction's rage
Society's whole race detested ! Some,
More mild, gasp out in agonies of soul
Their loath'd existence ; which nor physic's aid,
Nor sweet religion's interposing smile,
Sooths with one ray of comfort ! Gracious God !
And this is mercy !—Thus, from sentenc'd death
Britons in pity respite, to restore
And moralize mankind ! Correction this,
Just Heaven, design'd for reformation's end !
Ye slaves, that bred in tyranny's domains
Toil at the galleys, how supremely blest,
How exquisite your lot (so much deplor'd
By haughty sons of freedom) to the fate
Experienc'd hourly by her free-born sons,

In

In our Britannia's vaunted residence * ;
 Sole, chosen residence of faith refin'd,
 And genuine liberty ! Ye senators,
 Ye venerable sages of the law,
 In just resentment for your country's fame
 Wipe off this contradictory reproach
 To manners, and to policy like yours !
 Correct, but to amend : 'Tis God's own plan.
 Correct, but to reform ; then give to men
 The means of reformation ! Then, restor'd
 To recollection, to himself, to God,
 The criminal will bless your saving hand ;
 And brought to reason, to religion brought,
 Will own that solitude, as solely apt
 For work so solemn, has that work atchiev'd,
 Miraculous, and perfect of his cure.

Ah me !—to sentiments like these estrang'd,
 Estrang'd as ignorant, and never pent
 Till this sad chance within a prison's wall,
 With what deep force, experienc'd, can I urge
 The truths momentous ! How their power I feel
 In this my solitude, in this lone hour,
 This melancholy midnight hour of thought,
 Encircled with the unhappy ! firmly clos'd
 Each barricadoed door, and left, just God,
 Oh blessing—left to pensiveness and Thee !

To me how high a blessing, nor contains
 Seclusion aught of punishment ; to mix

With

* There is a thought in Lucan to the same purpose, elegantly expressed :

" Felices Arabes, Medique, Eoque Tellus,

" Quam sub perpetuis tenuerunt fata tyrannis.

" Ex populis, qui regna ferunt, Sors ultima nostra est,

" Quos servire pudet."

Pharsal. Lib. 7.

With wretches here were punishment indeed !
 How dread a punishment !—In life's best days,
 Of all most chosen, valued and belov'd,
 Was soft retirement's season. From youth's dawn
 To solitude inur'd " ne'er less alone
 " Than when alone," with him so truly fam'd
 In wisdom's school, my heart could ever beat
 Glad unison. To meditation's charms,
 Pleas'd votary, how have pass'd my sweetest hours.
 In her secrete and calm society !
 Still Meditation, Solitude's fair child,
 Man's dearest friend,—Oh happy be the time
 That introduc'd me to thy hallow'd train ;
 That taught me thro' thy genial lessons sage
 My best, my truest dignity to place
 In thought, reflection deep, and studious search,
 Divinest recreations of the mind !
 Oh, happy be the day which gave that mind
 Learning's first tincture—blest thy fostering care,
 Thou most belov'd of parents, worthiest fire !
 Which, taste-inspiring, made the letter'd page
 My favourite companion : most esteem'd,
 And most improving ! Almost from the day
 Of earliest childhood to the present hour
 Of gloomy, black misfortune, books, dear books,
 Have been, and are, my comforts. Morn and night,
 Adversity, prosperity, at home,
 Abroad, health, sickness,—good or ill report,
 The same firm friends ; the same refreshment rich,
 And source of consolation ! Nay, e'en here
 Their magic power they lose not : still the same,
 Of matchless influence in this prison-house,
 Unutterably horrid ; in an hour
 Of woe, beyond all fancy's fictions drear.

Drear hour!—What is it?—Lost in poignant
 thought,
 Lost in the retrospection manifold
 Of thee, lov'd study,—and of thee my fire,
 Who, to the fountain fair of Science led
 My infant feet,—I lose all count of time,
 I lose myself. Lift!—'tis dread midnight's hour
 When waking fancy with invention wild
 (By ages hallow'd) hath to spirits assign'd
 —Spirits of dear departed friends—to walk
 The silent gloom, and bring us from the dead
 Tales harrowing up the soul aghast!—And, hark!
 Solemn and slow the iron tongue of night
 Resounds alarming? My o'er-harass'd soul
 Confus'd, is lost in sorrows: down mine eyes
 Stream the full tears, distress is all alive,
 And quick imagination's pulse beats high.

“ Dear father, is it thou?” Methought his ghost
 Glided in silence by me! Not a word,—
 While mournfully he shakes his dear pale face!
 O stay, thou much lov'd parent! stay, and give
 One word of consolation; if allow'd
 To son, like whom no son hath ever lov'd,
 None ever suffer'd! See, it comes again:
 August it flits across th' astonish'd room!
 I know thee well, thy beauteous image know:
 Dear spirit stay, and take me to the world
 Where thou art. And where thou art, oh my father,
 I must, I must be happy.—Every day [love,
 Thou know'st, remembrance hath embalm'd thy
 And wish'd thy presence. Melancholy thought,
 At last to meet thee in a place like this!
 Oh stay and waft me instant—But, 'tis gone,
 The dear delusion! He nor hears my words,

My filial anxiety, nor regards
 My pleading tears. 'Twas but a coinage vain
 Of the distemper'd fancy ! Gone, 'tis gone,
 And here I'm left a trembling wretch to weep
 Unheard, unpitied left, to weep alone !

Nor thou, Maria, with me ! Oh, my wife,
 And is this bitter with the bitterest mix'd,
 That I must lose thy heavenly company,
 And consolation soothing ! Yet, 'tis best :
 Thy tenderness, thy presence, doth but wound
 And stab to the keenest quick my bursting heart !
 " I have undone thee ! " Can I then sustain
 Thy killing aspect, and that tender tear
 Which secret steals a-down thy lovely face,
 Dissembling smiles to cheer me—cheer me, Hea-
 vens !

Look on the mighty ruin I have pluck'd,
 Pluck'd instant, unsuspected, in the hour
 Of peace and dear security on her head !
 And where—O where can cheerfulness be found ?
 Mine must be mourning ever. Oh my wife,
 " I have undone thee ! "—What th' infuriate hand
 Of foes vindictive could not have achiev'd,
 In mercy would not, I have wrought ! Thy husband !
 Thy husband, lov'd with such unshaken truth,
 Thy husband, lov'd with such a steady flame,
 From youth's first hour !—Ev'n he hath on thee
 pluck'd,

On thee, his soul's companion, life's best friend,
 Such desolation, as to view would draw
 From the wild savage pity's deepest groan !

Yes, yes, thou coward mimic, pamper'd vice,
 High praise be sure is thine. Thou hast obtain'd

H

A worthy

My

A worthy triumph*! Thou hast pierc'd to the quick
 A weak, an amiable female heart,
 A conjugal heart most faithful, most attach'd:
 Yet can I pardon thee; for, poor buffoon,
 Thy vices must be fed; and thou must live,
 Luxurious live, a foe to God and man;
 Commission'd live, thy poison to diffuse,
 And taint the public virtue with thy crimes.
 Yes, I can pardon thee—low as thou art,
 And far too mean an object ev'n of scorn;
 For thou her merits knew'st not. Hadst thou
 known,

Thou,—callous as thou art to every sense
 Of human feeling, every nobler touch
 Of generous sensibility,—even thou
 Could'st not have wanton pierc'd her gentle breast;
 But at a distance awful would'st have stood,
 And, like thy prototype of oldest time,
 View'd her just virtues pass in triumph by,
 And own'd, howe'er reluctant——

* Alluding to the character of Mrs. Simony, introduced
 by Mr. Foote in his play of *The Cozeners*.

March 30. 1777.

END OF THE THIRD WEEK.

THOUGHTS IN PRISON.

WEEK THE FOURTH.

THE TRIAL.

DREAD'ST thou an earthly bar? Thou who
so oft

In contemplation serious hast employ'd
Thy dearest meditations on a bar
Tremendously decisive! who so oft
That bar's important terrors hast display'd
To crowds attentive; with the solemn theme
Rapt in thought profound—And beats thy heart
With throbs tumultuous—fail thy trembling knees,
Now that in judgment thou must stand before
Weak mortals, like thyself, and soon like thee,
Shivering with guilt and apprehensions dire,
To answer in dread judgment 'fore their God!

What gives that judgment terror? Guilt, pale
guilt;

Conscience accusing stern; the fiery law,
The terrible hand-writing on the wall!
But vanish these,—that mighty day's-man found
Who, smiling on confession's genuine tear,
The meek repentant aspect, and the hand
With ready, perfect retribution fraught,
Urges complete his ransom, and sets free
Th' immortal prisoner.—But, ah me! on earth

Such golden mercy reigns not : here is found
 No potent day's-man ; here no ransom full,
 No clement mediator. Here stern law,
 With visage all-unbending, eyes alone
 The rigorous act. Confession here is guilt,
 And restitution perfect, perfect loss !
 Ah me the while, here men the judges are ;
 And there, th' Omniscient mercy's source and
 stream !

Triumphant consolation ! Firm in faith,
 And justify'd by him whose precious blood
 For man flow'd liberal, the soul secure
 Of future acceptation at that bar
 Of trial most momentous, soars above
 The world's severest trials *, and can view

Serene

* The verses subjoined were written by the King of Prussia, after a defeat, when one of his general officers had proposed to set him the example of self-destruction :

Dans ces jours, pleins d'alarmes,
 La constance et la fermeté
 Sont les boucliers et les armes
 Que j'oppose à l'adversité :

Que le Destin me persecute,
 Qu'il prepare ou hâte ma chute,
 Le danger ne peut m'ébranler :
 Quand le vulgaire est plein de crainte,
 Que l'esperance semble éteinte,
 L'homme fort doit le signaler.

A friend having given Dr. Dodd in prison a copy of these lines, he was much pleased with them, and immediately paraphrased them as follows :

In these sad moments of severe distress,
 When dangers threaten, and when sorrows press,

For

Serene the horrors of an earthly bar,
 Tho' far than death more horrid. Yes, kind death,
 How preferable far thy fight to me !
 Oh that, without this tedious, dread detail
 Of awful circumstance,—this long, sad pomp
 Of ministering wretchedness, thy friendly shaft
 Had instant reach'd, and pierc'd my tortur'd heart :
 How had I blest the stroke, and been at peace !
 But through a dreary avenue of woe,
 A lengthen'd vault of black distress and shame,
 With mournful melancholy sable hung,
 Must I be led *,—or ere I can receive
 Thine icy comforts to my chill'd life's blood !

Welcome, thrice welcome were they ; but the call
 Of Heaven's dread arbiter we wait : His will
 Is rectitude consummate. 'Tis the will
 Parental of high wisdom and pure love.
 Then to that will submissive bend, my soul :
 And, while meek resignation to the rod
 Corrective of his justice and his love
 Obedient bows,—Oh for impartial search !
 Oh for a trial strict, to trace the cause,

H 3

The

For my defence behold what arms are given—
 Firmness of soul, and confidence in Heaven !
 With these, tho' Fortune hunt me thro' the land,
 Tho' instant utter ruin seem at hand,
 Compos'd and self-collected I remain,
 Nor start at perils, nor of ills complain.
 To mean despair the low, the servile fly,
 When Hope's bright star seems darken'd in their sky :
 Then shines the Christian, and delights to prove
 His faith unshaken, and unchang'd his love !

* *Segnius irritant animos demissa per aures,
 Quam quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus, et quæ
 Ipse sibi tradit Spectator !*

Hor.

The fatal cause whence sprung the ill deplor'd!
 And why—sad spectacle of woe—we stand
 Thus, sin and sorrow sunk, at this dread bar!

Return, blest hours—ye peaceful days, return!
 When thro' each office of celestial love
 Ennobling piety my glad feet led
 Continual, and my head each night to rest
 Lull'd on the downy pillow of content!
 Dear were thy shades, O Ham, and dear the hours
 In manly musing 'midst thy forests pass'd,
 And antique woods of sober solitude,
 Oh Epping, witness to my lonely walks
 By Heaven-directed contemplation led!
 Ye days of duty, tranquil nights, return!
 How ill exchang'd for those, which busier scenes
 To the world's follies dedicate, engross'd,
 In specious trifling; all important deem'd,
 While guilt, O Chesterfield, with seeming gold
 Of prime refinement, thro' thy fostering smile,
 And patronage auspicious!

Sought by thee,
 And singled out, unpatroniz'd, unknown;
 By thee, whose taste consummate was applause,
 Whose approbation merit; forth I came,
 And with me to the task, delighted, brought
 The upright purpose, the intention firm
 To fill the charge, to justify the choice,
 Perchance too flattering to my heart; a heart
 Frank, inexpert, unhackney'd in the world,
 And yet estrang'd to guile! But ye, more skill'd
 In that world's artful style, judges severe;
 Say, in the zenith of bright Stanhope's sun,
 (Though set that sun, alas, in misty clouds)!
 Say 'midst his lustre, whom would not that choice.

Have

Have flatter'd?—and still more, when urg'd, approv'd,

And blest'd by thee, St. David's! Honour'd friend;
Alike in wisdom's and in learning's school
Advanc'd and sage!—Short pause, my muse, and sad,
Allow, while leaning on affection's arm
Deep sighing Gratitude, with tears of truth,
Bedews the urn, the happy urn, where rest
Mingled thy ashes, oh my friend, and her's
Whose life bound up with thine in amity
Indissolubly firm, felt thy last pang
Disrupting as her own! gently sigh'd forth
The precious boon! while sprung her faithful soul
Indignant without thee to rest below,
On wings of love, to meet thee in the skies!

Blest pair, and envied! Envied and embalm'd
In our recording memory, my wife,
My friend, my lov'd Maria, be our lot
Like theirs!--But soft,--ah my foreboding thoughts!
Repress the gushing tear;—return my song.

Plac'd thus, and shelter'd underneath a tree,
Which seem'd like that in visions of the night
To Babylonia's haughty prince pourtray'd,
Whose height reach'd Heaven, and whose verdant
boughs

Extended wide their succour and their shade,
How did I trust, too confident! How dream
That fortune's smiles were mine; and how deceiv'd,
By gradual declension yield my trust,
My humble happy trust on Thee, my God!
How ill exchang'd for confidence in man,
In Chesterfields, in princes!—Wider scenes,
Alps still on Alps were open'd to my view;
And, as the circle in the flood enlarg'd,

Enlarg'd

Enlarg'd expences call. Fed to the full
 With flattery's light food *, and the puff'd wind
 Of promises delusive—" Onward still,
 " Press onward," cried the world's alluring voice;
 " The time of retribution is at hand : [blind,
 " See the ripe vintage waits thee !" Fool and
 Still credulous I heard, and still pursued
 The airy meteor glittering thro' the mire,
 Thro' brake and bog, till more and more engulf'd
 In the deceitful quag, floundering I lay.
 Nor heard was then the world's alluring voice,
 Or promises delusive : then not seen
 The tree umbrageous, with its ample shade :
 For me, alas, that tree had shade no more !
 But, struggling in the gulf, my languid eye
 Saw only round the barren rushy moor,
 The flat, wide dreary desert :—Till a hope,
 Dress'd by the tempter in an angel's form,
 Presenting its fair hand,—imagin'd fair,
 Though foul as murkiest Hell, to drag me forth,
 Down to the centre plung'd me, dark and dire
 Of howling ruin ;—bottomless abyfs
 Of desolating shame, and nameless woe !

But, witness Heaven and earth, 'midst this brief
 stage,
 This blasting period of my chequer'd life,
 Though by the world's gay vanities allur'd,
 I danc'd,

* So prayfen babes the peacock's starry traine,
 And wondren at bright Argus' blazing eye ;
 But who rewards him e'er the more for thy ?
 Or feeds him once the fuller by a graine ?—
 Like praise is smoke that sheddeth in the skie,
 Like words been winde, and waften soon in vaine.

SPENSER.

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The Sabbath-days delightful, when the throng
 Crowded thy hallow'd walls with eager joy,
 To hear truth evangelical ; the sound
 Of gospel comfort ! When attentive sat,
 Or at the holy altar humbly knelt,
 Persuasive, pleasing patterns—Athol's Duke,
 The polish'd Hervey, Kingston the humane,
 Aylesbury and Marchmont, Romney all-rever'd ;
 With numbers more—by splendid titles less
 Than piety distinguish'd and pure zeal.

Nor, 'midst this public duty's blest discharge,
 Pass'd idle, unimproving, unemploy'd,
 My other days ; as if the Sabbath's task
 Fulfill'd, the business of the week was done,
 Or self-allow'd. Witness, thrice holy book,
 Pure transcript of th' Eternal Will to man :
 Witness with what assiduous care I turn'd
 Daily the hallow'd page ; with what deep search
 Explor'd thy sacred meaning ; thro' the round
 Of learn'd expositors and grave trod slow,
 And painfully deliberating ; the while
 My labours unremitting to the world
 Convey'd instruction large ;—and shall convey,
 When moulders in the grave the feeble hand,
 The head, the heart, that gave those labours* birth.

Oh happy toil, oh labours well employ'd,
 Oh sweet remembrance to my sickening soul,
 Blest volumes ! Nor tho' levell'd in the dust
 Of self-annihilation, shall my soul
 Cease to rejoice, or thy preventive grace
 Adoring laud, Fountain of every good !

For

* Alluding to " Commentary on the Bible," in three volumes, folio.

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For that no letter'd poison ever stain'd
 My page, how weak foe'er ; for that my pen,
 However humble, ne'er has trac'd a line
 Of tendency immoral, whose black guilt
 It well might wish to blot with tears of blood,
 Dear to the Christian shall my little works,
 —Effusions of a heart sincere, devote
 To God and duty, happily survive
 Their wretched master ; and thro' lengthen'd years
 To souls oppress'd, comfort's sweet balm impart,
 And teach the pensive mourner how to die *.

Thou too, blest Charity, whose golden key
 So liberal unlocks the prison's gate
 At the poor debtor's call ; oh, witness thou,
 To cruel taxers of my time and thought,
 All was not lost, all were not misemploy'd,
 Nor all humanity's fair rights forgot ;
 Since thou, spontaneous effort of the last,
 My pity's child, and by the first matur'd,
 Amidst this flattering, fatal era, rose ;
 Rose into being, to perfection rose,
 Beneath my humble fostering ; and at length
 Grown into public favour, thou shalt live ;
 And endless good diffuse, when sleeps in dust
 Thy hapless founder now, by direst fate,
 Lock'd in a prison, whence thy bounty sets,
 And shall—oh comfort—long set thousands free,

Happy, thrice happy, had my active zeal,—
 Already deemed too active chance, by some,
 Whose frozen hearts, in icy fetters bound
 Of sordid selfishness, ne'er felt the warmth,

The

* Referring to "Comfort for the Afflicted," and "Reflections on Death."

The genial warmth of pure benevolence,
 Love's ardent flame aspiring ; had that flame
 Kindled my glowing zeal into effect,
 And to thy counterpart * existence giv'n,

Lov'd

* He intended to have established a " Charity for the
 " Loan of Money, without interest, to industrious trades-
 " men." Necessary papers for that end were collected from
 Dublin, &c.; and the following address, which he wrote,
 and inserted in the Public Ledger of the 1st January 1776,
 will, in some measure, explain his purpose :

To the Wealthy in the Commercial World.

I HAVE often wished most sincerely to see a charitable
 fund established in this great and trading city, for the bene-
 ficent purpose of " lending to honest and industrious trades-
 " men small sums without interest, and on a reasonable se-
 " curity."

The benefits which would arise from such an establishment
 are too obvious to need enumeration. Almost every new-
 paper tends more and more to convince me of the necessity
 of such a plan; for in almost every newspaper we read ad-
 vertisements from tradesmen, soliciting little sums in their
 distress, and offering—poor unhappy men! even premiums
 for those little sums.

It is not possible but that persons occupied in trade and
 commerce must feel for the difficulties of their brethren,
 and be ready to promote the undertaking I would wish to
 recommend, although on no interested motives; for I am
 no tradesman, nor can any way be benefited by the plan.
 Pure good will, and a compassionate respect to the hardships
 and distresses of my fellow-creatures, actuate my heart:
 And from these motives I shall be happy to proceed upon,
 and prosecute this plan, with all the efforts and assiduity I
 am able, if it shall be approved by the benevolent; and they
 will testify that approbation, and desire of concurrence, by a
 line directed to D. at Anderson's Coffee-house, Fleet-street.
 In consequence of which, should a probability of success
 appear,

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Lov'd institution ; with its guardian aid
 Protecting from the prison's ruinous doors,
 Those whom thy kindly mercy rescues thence !
 Or, had that zeal on firm foundation fix'd
 Like thine my favourite Magdalen,—the plan,
 Preservative of tender female fame *,
 Fair innocence and virtue from those ills
 Destructive, complicate, which only find
 Relief beneath thy hospitable roof,
 How had I died exulting !—But, oh raise,
 Inspire some godlike spirit, some great soul,
 Father of mercies, of all love, all good,
 Author and finisher ;—these and every work
 Beneficent, with courage to pursue,
 With wisdom to complete ! Oh crown his zeal ;
 I While

appear, a meeting shall speedily be advertised in the papers, and all measures pursued to put the good design into immediate execution, which on such a meeting may be judged advisable. It may be proper just to observe, that in many cities abroad,—at Rome in particular,—there are institutions of this sort ; and there has been one established for many years at Dublin, which is found productive of the happiest consequences.

It is made in Scripture one characteristic of the good man, “ that he is merciful, and lendeth :” and a very small sum, thus given to a permanent establishment, may enable a man to lend for perpetuity !

How can we better begin the new year, my worthy and humane countrymen, than by entering on a work which may draw down upon us God's blessing, by our charitable relief to many sons and daughters of honest and laborious industry ?—

HUMANITY.

* “ A plan for a National Female Seminary”—since found amongst the Author's papers ; and which appears to have undergone the inspection, and received the approbation, of some very distinguished names.

While sorrowing numan hature, by his hand
 Cherish'd and sooth'd, to latest times shall tell,
 And bless with tears of gratitude his name!

Mine is a different fate,—confess'd, just Judge,
 The meed of human mixture in my works
 Imperfect, frail; and needing, even the best,
 Thy pardon and the cleansing of thy blood,
 Else whence the frequent retributions base,
 Calumnious and ungrateful, for the deeds
 Of private pity? Whence, for public acts,
 The stab opprobrious, and the slanders vile!
 Or whence, at this dread moment,—from the sight
 Shroud me in tenfold darkness!—Mercy, Heaven!

And is it He—th' ingenuous youth so oft
 Of all my being, fortune, comfort deem'd
 The generous, ample source?—And is it He,
 In whom, thro' drear misfortune's darkest night,
 I saw Hope's day-star rising?—Angel of peace,
 Amidst his future hours, my life's sad loss,
 Let not accusing conscience to his charge
 Impute, distracting—to my crimson'd guilt
 Oh let him lay it, as the forfeit due, [paid!
 And justly paid!—Would Heaven that it were
 Oh, that with Rome's first Cæsar, in my robe
 From fight so killing, mantled up mine eyes,
 I might receive the welcome stab; sigh forth,
 "My Philip, my lov'd Stanhope,—Is it thou?
 "Then let me die."——

Yet, though thus wounded at this bar I stand
 In pangs unutterable, witness Heaven,
 With deep commiseration do I view
 Their sedulous anxiety to prove
 A guilt my heart—too wounded to deny,
 Wounded by that guilt's sense, its bitterest part,—

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Infant avow'd. What need then all this toil?
 The deed is done. Wound not the fall'n hart,—
 'Tis cruel—that lies bleeding at your feet:
 ' I own the whole; I urge no legal plea.
 ' On dire necessity's imperious call,
 ' (Sons of the robe, of commerce, sons of men,
 ' That call imperious have you never heard)?
 ' On full intention to repay the whole.
 ' And on that full intention's perfect work,
 ' Free restoration and complete; on wrong
 ' Or injury to none design'd or wrought,
 ' I rest my claim;—I found my sole defence.'
 " Groundless,—'tis thunder'd in my ears—and
 " weak:

" For in the rigid courts of human law,
 " No restitution wipes away th' offence,
 " Nor does intention justify." So spoke
 (And who shall argue)? Judgment's awful voice!

Haste then, ye weeping jurymen, and pass
 Th' awarded sentence. To the world, to fame,
 To honour, fortune, peace, and Stanhope lost,
 What have I more to lose? or can I think
 Death were an evil to a wretch like me!

Yet, oh ye sons of justice!—e'er we quit
 This awful court, expostulation's voice
 One moment hear impartial. Give a while
 Your honest hearts to nature's touches true,
 Her fine resentments faithful. Draw aside
 That veil from reason's clear reflecting view,
 Which practice long, and rectitude suppos'd
 Of laws establish'd, hath obstructive hung.
 But pleads, or time, or long prescription aught
 In favour or abatement of the wrong
 By folly wrought, or error? Hoary grown,

And sanctify'd by custom's habit gray,
 Absurdity stalks forth, still more absurd,
 And double shame reflects upon an age
 Wise and enlighten'd. Should not equal laws
 Their punishments proportionate to crimes* ;
 Nor, all Draconic, ev'n to blood pursue
 Vindictive, where the venial poor offence
 Cries loud for mercy ? Death's the last demand
 Law can exact : the penalty extreme
 Of human crime ! and shall the petty thief
 Succumb beneath its terrors, when no more
 Pays the bold murderer, crimson'd o'er with guilt ?
 Few are the crimes against or God or man,
 —Consult th' eternal code of right or wrong,—
 Which e'er can justify this last extreme †,
 This wanton sporting with the human life,
 This trade in blood. Ye sages, then, review,
 Speedy and diligent, the penal code,

Humanity's

* Horace's precept must for ever stand forth as irrefragably just :

——— " Adfit

Regula ! peccatis quæ pœnas irroget æquas :
 Ne Scutica dignum horribili sectère flagello."

Sat. 3. Lib. 1.

† " He had sometimes expressed his thoughts about our
 " penal laws, that they were too sanguinary ; that they
 " were against not only the laws of God, but of nature ;
 " that his own case was hard, that he should die for an act
 " which he always declared to be wrong, but by which he
 " never intended to injure any one individual ; and that, as
 " the public had forgiven him, he thought he might have
 " been pardoned. But now (the day before his execution)
 " he laid all these thoughts touching himself aside, though
 " he continued to think in the same manner of the penal
 " laws to his end." See the Ordinary's account.

By all the blood henceforth unjustly spilt,
 Or wantonly by all the sorrows deep,
 And scalding tears shed for that blood so spilt
 In God's tremendous name, lo, I adjure,
 Without procrastination to the task
 Important that you haste! With equal hand
 In scales of temperate justice, balance well
 The claims of pleading mercy! Unto crimes
 Inflictions just and adequate assign
 On reformation or example sole,
 And all impartial, constantly intent,
 Banish the rage for blood! for tortures fell
 Savage, reproachful. Study to restore
 Its young, its useful members to the state,
 Well disciplin'd, corrected, moraliz'd;
 Preserv'd at once from shame, from death, from
 Hell,

Men, rationals, immortals.—Sons of God.
 Oh, prosperous be your labours, crown'd your zeal!

So shall the annals of our Sovereign's reign,
 Distinguish'd by your virtue,—noble fruit
 Of that high independence He bestow'd *
 So freely from the treasury of his love
 To genuine justice—down to future times,
 Transmitting the rich blessing, shine renown'd,
 With truest glory; not by hers surpass'd,
 Th' immortal Legislator of the north!

Ah me unhappy! to that Sovereign's ear
 Resolv'd to bring those truths which, labouring
 long,

Have

* Referring to the independence of the judges, settled by the King, as almost one of the first acts of his reign.

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Distracted, madden'd, turn ! Of reason more,
 Religion, duty, eminence, dream not :
 The door of mercy's clos'd. Thee—oft from thee
 Mercy, sweet Heaven, have I sought and found ;
 From fellow-mortals seldom could I find,
 How humbled e'er, or penitent for faults !
 —And who of erring mortals faultless breathes ?
 Mercy that gift of thine, which most adorns
 The judge's vestment, and the monarch's crown.

Adieu then to its hope ; its earthly hope,
 Elsewhere we'll seek it. Forth—oh forth, my
 friends ;

My generous, supporting, weeping friends,
 Forth from the bar conduct me. It is past.
 Justice has done her office. Mercy's fled ;
 And smiling, lo ! she sits upon a cloud
 Of fleecy whiteness, ting'd with azur'd gold,
 And beams ineffable composure on me !
 Light sits my bosom'd master on his throne ;
 Airy and disencumber'd feels my soul ;
 And, panting, wishes to spring instant up
 To that white cloud,—the golden vehicle
 To realms of rest immortal ! In my eyes,
 So languid late, and all suffus'd with tears,
 Methinks I see hope's lamp rekindled bright ;
 A living lustre ; shedding like the sun,
 After thick mists, Illumination's smile
 O'er all my countenance, marr'd, dimm'd, and wan.

Cheerly, my friends, oh cheerly ! Look not thus
 With pity's melting softness ! That alone
 Can shake my fortitude. All is not lost.
 Lo ! I have gain'd, on this important day,
 A victory consummate o'er myself,
 And o'er this life a victory. On this day

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My birth-day to eternity—I've gain'd
 Dismission from a world, where for a while,
 Like you, like all, a pilgrim passing poor,
 A traveller, a stranger, I have met
 But stranger treatment, rude and harsh! So much
 The dearer, more desir'd, the home I seek
 Eternal of my Father and my God!

Ah, little thought ye, prosecutors prompt,
 To do me good like this! little intend
 For earthly poverty to give the exchange
 Of wealth eternal! Cheronea's sage,
 Thy dogmas here, so paradoxal deem'd
 By weak half-thinkers*—see how amply prov'd,
 How verify'd by men I judg'd my foes;—
 Friends in disguise, Heaven's instruments of good!
 Freely, triumphantly, my soul forgives
 Each injury, each evil they have wrought,
 Each tear they've drawn, each groan they've cost
 my heart,

Guileless tow'ards them, uninjur'd. Hapless men!
 Down do I look with pity: fervent beg,
 And unremitting from all-gracious Heaven
 Eternal blessings on you! Be your lives,
 Like mine, true convertites to grace, to God!
 And be our deaths,—ah, there all difference
 ends—

Then be our deaths like his, th' atoning just;
 Like his, the only righteous, our last end!

But oh, oblivious memory! baneful woe,
 Which thus in dull forgetfulness can sleep
 My faculties;—forgetfulness of her

My

* See Plutarch "On the Benefits deducible from Enemies." *Morals*, vol. 1.

My better self, for whom alone I wish,
 Thus fallen to remember that I am !
 My wife, my soul's dear partner in distress,
 Where sits she ? lives she ? Ah not lives, but drags
 The tedious, torturing, horrid, anxious hours
 Of this dire day !—In solemn silence wrapt,
 —Expressive silence motionless, compos'd
 The melancholy mourner meekly waits
 The awful issue ! From her lovely eyes
 Drops not a tear ! not ev'n a sigh is heard '
 From her deep-wounded heart : Nor thro' her
 lips,

Unsever'd from the luckless morn till night,
 Mute sufferer, steals a murmur* ! Gentle dove,
 So, in the mournful absence of thy mate,
 Perhaps or levell'd by the fowler's art,
 Or lur'd in net insidious, fittest thou alone
 Upon the bared bough ; thy little head
 Nestling beneath thy silvery wings ; while hang
 Thy pennons, late so glossy, shivering down
 Unplum'd, neglected, drooping ! Thro' the day
 So tried, my tender friends,—another task,
 And heavier yet, remains to be perform'd.
 Oh, with the balm of comfort, with the voice
 Of soothing softness, the sad truth unfold !
 Approach the beauteous mourner, all-rever'd ;
 And tell her, "that her husband triumphs, lives ;—
 " Lives, tho' condemn'd ; lives to a nobler life !
 " Nor in the gladsome view of that high life,
 " Feels he to death reluctance : Blest with her,
 " Indifferent

* " I speechless sat ;—nor plaintive word,
 " Nor murmur, from my lips was heard."

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"Indifferent in his choice to live or die!"

Be the decision thine, Father of life!

Thou gavest, thou hast right to take away;

In each alike beneficent! If thou

Hast pleasure in me, once more shall I share

Thy hallow'd services, my heart's chief joy;

If not with happy David—oh like his

Could my song flow repentant—every thought

Uniting cries with resignation's voice,

"Do with me, Lord, as it shall seem Thee good *!"

Thus supplicating, down my weary head

To slumber on its wretched pillow sunk,

O'erpower'd, oppress'd. Nor on the main-mast
high,

Rock'd by the bellowing tempest, and the dash

Of furious surges, the poor ship-boy sleeps

More soundly, than my powers o'erwrought, amidst

The din of desperate felons, and the roar

Of harden'd guilt's mad midnight orgies loud!

But fancy free, the busy soul was wake;

Anticipation pleasing of its state,

When sleeps its clayey prison in the grave,

And forth it bursts to liberty! Methought

—Such was the vision—in a lowly vale

Myself I found, whose living green was deck'd

With all the beauteous family of Spring;

Pale primrose, modest violet, hare-bell blue,

Sweet-scented eglantine of fragrance rich,

And permanent the rose: golden jonquil,

And polyanthus variegate of hue,

With lilies dale delighting. Thro' the midst

Meandering of pure crystal flow'd a stream

The

* 2 Sam. xv. 25, 26.

The flowery banks reflecting : On each side,
 With homely cots adorn'd, whose 'habitants,
 When sorrow-sunk, my voice of comfort sooth'd ;
 When sickness-worn my hand of care reliev'd,
 Tended, and ministering to all their wants,
 Instructed in the language of the skies.

Dear was the office, cheering was the toil,
 And something like angelic felt my soul !

When lur'd, methought, by one of glittering hue
 (Bright gleam'd the coronet upon his brow,
 Rich glow'd his robe of crimson, ermine deck'd)
 I toil'd to gain a neighbouring mountain's top
 Where blaz'd preferment's temple. So my guide
 With smile complacent taught and led me on,
 Softening with artful speech the tedious way,
 And arduous ever. As I rose, the view
 Still gloomier seem'd, and dreary ; the strait path
 Still straiter, and more sharp the pointed briars
 Entangling ! With insulting sneers the crowd,
 Pressing the same bad road : jostled me by,
 Or threw me prostrate : till fatigu'd and faint,
 With feeble voice, exhausted quite, I cried,
 " Oh to my vale restore me ! to my cots,
 " Illustrious guide ! my ministrations blest,
 " Angelical and blessing !" — With a look
 Of killing scorn he eyed me : Instant down,
 Precipitate dash'd o'er me craggy rocks,
 Tumbling tumultuous ; and in dungeon dark,
 Illumin'd only by the furious glare
 Of lynx and tygers eyes, thro' hunger fierce,
 And eager to devour, trembling I lay !

When, in a moment, thro' the dungeon's gloom
 Burst light resplendent as the mid-day sun,
 From adamant shield of Heavenly proof,

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Held high by one*, of more than human port,
 Advancing slow : while on his tow'ring crest
 Sat fortitude unshaken : At his feet
 Crouch'd the half-famish'd savages ? From earth
 He rais'd me, weeping, and with look of peace
 Benignant, pointed to a crimson cross
 On his bright shield pourtray'd. A milder form,
 Yet of celestial sweetness,—such as oft
 My raptur'd eyes have in the tablet trac'd
 Of unaffected penitence ; of her
 Pleasing similitude—the weeping fair
 Early from royal, but unhallow'd love,
 To God's sole service flying †—Fam'd Le Brun,
 Thy glowing pencil's master-piece !—Such seem'd
 Repentance, meek approaching. From the den,
 Illumin'd and defended by faith's shield,
 My trembling feet she led ; and having borne
 Thro' perils infinite, and terrors wild
 And various,—fainting almost my sick soul—
 She left me at a gate of glittering gold,
 Which open'd instantaneous at the touch
 Of homely porter ‡, clad in wolsey gray ;
 And ever bending lowly to the ground
 His modest countenance ! But what a scene
 —Admitted thro' the portal—on my sight
 Transported, rush'd ! High on a sapphire throne,
 Amidst a flame like carbuncle, sat Love,
 Beaming forth living rays of light and joy
 On choral crowds of spirits infinite,
 In immortality and glory cloth'd ;

K

And

* Faith.

† Madame de la Valiere. This fine picture is in the Chapel of the Carmelite Nuns at Paris.

‡ Humility.

And hymning lofty strains to minstrelsy
Of golden harps accorded, in his praise,
Love, uncreate, essential : Love, which bled ;
Which bleeding blanch'd to purest white their robes,
And with eternal gold adorn'd their brows !

Dissolv'd, methought, and all my senses rapt
In vision beatific, to a bank
Of purple amaranthus was I borne
By a superior genius. His white wings
Distilling panacea, dove-like spread
Refreshing fragrance o'er me : Firm of brow
And masculine he seem'd—th' ennobling power
Angelic, destin'd in the human heart
To nourish friendship's flame ! Uprais'd my eyes
As from a trance returning—" Spirit belov'd,
" And honour'd ever !" anxious strait I cried,
" Thrice welcome to my wishes ? Oh impart—
" For you can tell—in these delightful realms
" Of happiness supernal, shall we know,—
" Say, shall we meet and know those dearest friends,
" Those tender relatives, to whose concerns
" You minister appointed ? Shall we meet
" In mutual amity ? mutual converse hold,
" And live in love immortal ? Oh relieve
" My aching heart's solicitude ; and say,
" Here shall I meet, here know, in boundless blefs,
" Here view transported, her, my life's best friend,
" My sorrows faithful soother !" —Gushing tears
Impetuous stopt my voice ; and I awoke
To earth, to night, to darkness, and a jail !

April 14. 1777.

END OF THE FOURTH WEEK.

THOUGHTS IN PRISON.

WEEK THE FIFTH.

FUTURITY.

"TO death devote!" Thus in the vernal bloom

Of redolent youth and beauty, on the cross
Hung high her motto *;—she, in name and choice
Of that far better part, like her so fam'd
In story evangelical,—sweet saint,
Friend of my soul, and soother of my grief,
Shall I then dread in age, and worn with woe,
To meet the king of terrors?—Coward fear
Of what we all must meet: The primal curse
Of our first father rests on all his race,
And "Dust to dust," the charter of mankind!

But, were it possible, oh, who would wish
To stretch the narrow span, grown tedious, stale,
With dull recurrence of the same dull acts,
Ev'n in its happiest state! A toilsome care,
A wearying round of clothing, food, and sleep:

K 2

While

* Miss Mary Bosanquet, whose motto, encircling a cross, is, "Devoted to Death." From fourteen years of age she dedicated herself to sincere religion, and to the present hour has persevered in the most exemplary line of duty. Her letters to the author, in his last distress, afforded him peculiar comfort.

While chequer'd over with a thousand ills
 Inevitably painful !—In our frame
 Dwell (death's artillery) diseases dire,
 And potent to dislodge the brittle life
 With agonies heart-rending ! In the soul
 Lurks sin, the serpent, with her fiery sting
 Of sorrow, rankling on the conscience deep,
 Source of all mental misery !—From without,
 In close battalion, a black troop of ills
 Level their deep-drawn arrows at our peace ;
 And fail not, as we pass thro' life's bad road,
 To wound th' unguarded traveller ! witness you
 Who groan distress'd beneath oppression's scourge ;
 Ingratitude's sharp tooth ; the canker'd tongue
 Of slander ; fortune's loss ; or bitterer far,
 The loss of fame, and soul-connected friends !

Thus tax'd, thus wretched, can the man be wise
 Who wishes to retain so poor a boon ?
 Who fears to render the deposit up
 To his blest hands who gave it ? And who thus
 Beneficent hath rang'd his moral plan,
 Thus good with evil mix'd ; from earth's poor love
 (School of probation) suffering man to wean,
 And raise his hopes to heaven ! Silence then
 The whisper of complaint ; low in the dust
 Dissatisfaction's dæmons growl unheard !
 All, all is good, all excellent below :
 Pain is a blessing ; sorrow leads to joy,
 Joy permanent and solid ! Every ill
 Bears with its love paternal : nay, ev'n death,
 Grim death itself, in all its horrors clad,
 Is man's supremest privilege ! It frees
 The soul from prison, from foul sin, from woe,
 And gives it back to glory, rest, and God !

When

When will its welcome message lay at peace
 My burden'd, beating heart?—Oh strange! to point
 Thy darts, inexorable tyrant, there,
 Where life laughs crown'd with roses; when these
 arms,

Familiar to thy sister Sorrow's fold.
 Would so delighted hug thee! But thou lov'st
 Full oft the noblest quarry, highest aim:
 Lov'st unsuspected, and with silent step,
 To steal on the secure: Lov'st to deal round
 Tremendous and impartial thy stern strokes,
 Asserting terrible o'er human-kind
 Thy empire irresistible: And now
 At monarchs, now at mimics, grinning scorn,
 Thy hand indifferent hurls the twanging shaft.

Ah what a groupe of primest deer lie pierc'd,
 Thou hunter all victorious, at thy feet;
 Since to thy empire dedicate I fell [grave,
 From life's bright hope, and languish'd in this
 This living, doleful sepulchre immur'd!

Not all thy gold or orient pearl could save
 Thee, Lusitania's monarch, from the stroke
 Impending long and dread! Nor, Terrick *, thee,
 Thy mitre and thy rochet! Ensigns blest,
 When worn with sanctity; then surely chang'd
 For crown of gold, and robe of spotless white!

See, neither can the coronet, nor garb
 Of ermin'd pomp, from Temple † turn aside
 The levell'd blow; nor, higher far in price,
 Th' uplifted shield of Janssen's honest heart!
 Lo! too, as if in scorn of purpled pride,
 And all life's glories, in this high parade

K 3

Funereal

* Bishop of London.

† Countess of Temple.

Funereal marches, tragic-actor now,
 He who so late light on the comic sock
 Trod the gay stage, and bade with laughter's burst
 Involuntary the throng'd theatres resound !
 And, food for worms, poor Woodward, thou no less
 Than patriots, princes, countesses and priests !
 Death scorns distinctions : But, despotic power,
 Cloth'd in his direst terrors, here he reigns,
 Here revels ! Here with bitterest vengeance, shakes
 O'er trembling convicts his determin'd shaft,
 And gluts himself with horror ! See him lead
 From yonder darksome cell, all pale with woe,
 That stranger * sinking ! who, in luckless hour,
 With rash hand pierc'd the bosom he ador'd,
 Nor drank of comfort more ! half in his heart
 The black lance festering sticks ; and death himself,
 Howe'er relentless, ere he drives it home,
 Of strange commiseration feels a pang,
 Reluctant to his office !—

But, that shriek—
 Thrilling with dread—whence is it ? 'Tis the voice
 Of female misery, bursting thro' the crowd
 To the lone dungeon : view that lovely form †,
 Deck'd

* Alluding to Tolefa, a poor unhappy Spaniard, lately executed for the murder of his female friend. He took scarce any sustenance from the time of the fact, and was more than half dead when conveyed to the place of execution.

† This also alludes to a miserable catastrophe, which happened here on the morning of a late execution. The poor young woman who came to visit her husband, had lain in but seven days. As soon as the husband's fetters were knocked off, he stepped aside, and cut his throat in a dismal manner, but not quite sufficiently to finish his existence ;—and in that shocking state—paid his debt—at the destined place.

Deck'd in the neatest white,—yet not so white
 And wan as her wild visage : “ Keep me not,”
 Raving she cries, “ Keep me not, cruel, from him.
 “ He dies this morn ; I know it : he's condemn'd ;
 “ The dreadful judge has done it ! He must die,
 “ My husband ! and I'm come, clad in my best,
 “ To go and suffer with him ! I have brought
 “ Sweet flowers to cheer him, and to strew his corse.
 “ Pale, pale, and speechless lies it !—Husband come !
 “ The little infant, fruit of our glad loves,
 “ Smil'd on me, as with parting breath I blest,
 “ And kiss'd the dear babe for thee ! 'Tis but
 “ young ;

“ 'Tis tender yet ;—seven days is young in life :
 “ Angels will guard my little innocent :
 “ They'll feed it, tho' thou could'st not find it food,
 “ And its poor mother too !—And so thou dy'st !
 “ For me and it thou dy'st ! But not alone ;
 “ Thou shalt not go alone : I will die with thee :
 “ Sweet mercy be upon us ! Hence, hence, hence !”
 Impetuous then her white arms round his neck
 She threw ; and, with deep groans would pierce a
 rock,

Sunk fainting. Oh the husband's, father's pangs,
 Stopping all utterance ! Up to Heaven he roll'd
 His frantic eyes ; and, staring wildly round
 In desperation's madness, to his heart
 Drove the destructive steel !—Fell death,
 Would'st thou a fuller triumph ?—Oh my wife,
 How dismal to our ears the shrieks, the groans !—
 And what a crowd of wild ideas press
 Distracting on the soul ! “ Merciful Heaven,
 “ In pity spare us ! Say, it is enough,
 “ And bid the avenging angel stay his hand !”

Death

Death bars the plea ; and with his thundering
stalk

Brushing beside us, calls, in solemn sound,
Heed to his dart grief-pointed. Its keen stroke,
Ah, gentle Eleonora * ! gives at once
Relief to thy o'er-burden'd breast ! to ours
Anguish unutterable ! 'Tis ours he wounds,
Thou amiable friend !—whose languid eye
Ne'er rais'd a look from earth since that sad hour
When sunk my sun ! Thou, who from earliest youth
Hast humbly sought thy God, thou art at peace :
Happy, thrice happy, on that golden shore,
Where from the tossing of these troublous waves
We soon shall land. Oh stay, affectionate,
Oh wait and welcome us ! Or, if in Heaven
Blest saints retain concern for those on earth
Held in the dearest amity, become
Thy darling sister's guardian ! As from youth,
From childhood's dawn her dear maternal guide,
Be now, lov'd spirit, in this hour of woe,
Her angel-comfort, her support ! Alas,
What talk I of support ! thou mercy's God !
When all her conduct, by the grace inspir'd—
When all her patient gentleness and love,
Her fortitude unparallel'd, and peace,
Have thee their Author : Be the glory thine !

But say, my soul, 'midst these alarming calls,
This dread familiarity with death ;
Our common debt, from infancy's first cry
Denounc'd, expected, tho' its sure approach

Lurks

* Mrs. Dodd's sister ; who, in the midst of our sorrows,
did—what she never did before—augment them, by dying
of a heart broken with grief for our calamity. Oh misery !

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Lurks in uncertainty's obscurest night ;—
 Our common debt, which babes and palsied seers,
 Princes and pilgrims, equally must pay ;—
 Say, canst thou feel reluctance to discharge
 The claim inevitable ? Senseless he,
 Who in life's gaudiest moments fondly strives
 To turn his eyes unheeding from the view
 Instructive. 'Midst those moments, deep it dwelt
 On my reflecting mind * ! a mind which liv'd
 More in the future than the present world ;
 Which, frequent call'd by duty's solemn voice
 From earth's low scenes, on those sublimer far
 Hath ever thought delighted ; and those thoughts
 Conveying to mankind, in them desires
 Its real transcript, its resemblance true
 May be survey'd—the picture of itself.
 For, whatsoe'er may be our earthly state,
 The mind's the man. My humble labours, then,
 When rests my part corporeal in the dust,
 Hang up my living portrait !—And to give
 Those labours all their force, summon'd I stand
 By awful providence, to realize
 The theoretic lessons I have taught.
 And lo ! compos'd, I fix my dying seal
 In attestation to their truth, their power,
 Felt at my heart, my inmost conscience felt ;
 Imparting triumph o'er life's love ; o'er death
 Consummate exultation ! while my soul
 Longs to go forth, and pants for endless day !

But who can wonder, that amidst the woes,
 Like a swollen torrent, which with frightful roar
Have

* Reflections on Death—Thoughts on Epiphany—Ser-
 mon on Mutual Knowledge, &c.

Have burst destructive o'er me ; midst the loss
 Of all things dear, Fame, Honour, Peace, and Rest ;
 Amidst the cruel spoiling of my goods,
 The bitterest rancour of envenom'd spite,
 And calumny unfeeling * ;—what surprise
 That my wean'd soul, above this wordly wreck,
 With anxious expectation waits the call
 From melancholy mourning and dim grief,
 To everlasting gladness ? Powerful Hope,
 And all-sufficient to sustain the soul,
 Tho' walking thro' the darkest vale of woe !
 Who shall disprove that Hope ? or who pretend
 By subtle sophistry that soul to rob
 Of its chief anchor, choicest privilege
 And noblest consolation—" Stedfast Faith
 " In great Futurity's extended scene :
 " Eternity of Being ? All things round
 Arise in brightest proof : I see it, feel it,
 Thro' all my faculties, thro' all my powers,
 Pervading irresistible. Each groan
 Sent from my sorrowing heart ; each scalding tear
 From my convicted eyes ; each fervent prayer
 By meek repentance offer'd up to Heaven,
 Asserts my immortality ! proclaims
 A pardoning Deity and future world.
 Nor less the thought, chill, comfortless, abhorr'd,
 Of loath'd annihilation !—From the view
 Humiliating, mean, unworthy man,
 Almost unworthy reptiles,—glad I turn,

And

* Numberless letters of a most unchristian, horrid, and
 cruel nature, were continually sent to him in the height of
 his distresses. Yet some of these letters were subscribed, A
 Lady, A Christian, or, a Christian Brother.

And triumph in existence ! Nay, each ill
 And every mundane trouble preaches loud
 The same important truth. I read it fair
 And legibly engrav'd on all below :
 On all the inequalities discern'd
 In this perplexing, mix'd, and motley scene ;
 In every rank and order of mankind * ;
 Nay, in the wisest system of our laws,
 Inadequate, imperfect,—and full oft
 Unjust and cruel ; in this dismal jail,
 And in the proudest palaces alike
 I read, and glory to trace out the marks
 Irrefragably clear of future life,
 Of retribution's just and equal state.

So reason urges ; while fair Nature's self,
 At this sweet season †, joyfully throws in
 Her attestation lovely ; bids the sun,
 All-bounteous, pour his vivifying light,
 To rouse and waken from their wint'ry death
 The vegetable tribe ! Fresh from their graves,
 At his resistless summons, start they forth,
 A verdant resurrection ! In each plant,
 Each flower, each tree to blooming life restor'd,
 I trace the pledge, the earnest, and the type
 Of man's revival, of his future rise
 And victory o'er the grave,—compell'd to yield,
 Her sacred, rich deposit, from the seed
 Corrupt and mortal, and immortal frame

Glorious

* See Maclean's Answer to Jenyns, &c. p. 52.

† Spring. See my Poem on the Epiphany, ver. 131, &c.
 I would have that Poem considered, in dependence with this,
 as my serious thoughts on these awful subjects, in an early
 period of my life ; and which, in this last and dreadful one,
 I find no reason to alter.

Glorious and incorruptible ; like his,
 The Sun of righteousness, whose living power
 The mighty work shall operate ! Yes, bright source
 Of spiritual life !—the immaterial world
 Pervading, quickening, gladdening,—in the rays
 Full-orb'd of Revelation, thy prime gift,
 I view display'd, magnificent, and full,
 What reason, nature, in dim darkness teach,
 Tho' visible, not distinct : I read with joy
 Man's high prerogative ; transported read
 The certain, clear discovery of life
 And immortality, announc'd by thee,
 Parent of truth, celestial Visitant,
 Fountain of all intelligence divine !
 Of that high immortality the King,
 And of that life the Author ! How man mounts,
 Mounts upon angel-wings, when fief'd, secur'd
 In that sublime inheritance ; when seen
 As a terrestrial stranger here ; a god
 Confin'd awhile in prison of the flesh,
 Soon, soon to soar, and meet his brother-gods,
 His fellows, in eternity !—How creeps,
 How grovels human nature ! What a worm,
 An insect of an hour, poor, sinful, sad ;
 Despis'd and despicable, reptile-like
 Crawls man, his moment on his ant-hill here :
 —Marking his little shining path with slime,—
 If limited to earth's brief round
 His painful, narrow views ! Like the poor moth,
 By lights delusive to destruction led ;
 Still struggling oft its horrors to evade,
 Still more and more involv'd ; in flames he lives
 His transient, toilsome minute, and expires
 In suffocating smoke.

Hume,

Hume, thou art gone !

Amidst the catalogue of those mow'd down
By time's huge scythe, late noted* : Thou, be sure,
Wast not forgotten ! Author, thou hast gain'd
Thy vast ambition's summit : Fame was thine ;
Wealth too, beyond thy amplest wish's bound,
Encompass'd thee : And lo, the pageant ends !
For who, without compassion's generous tear,
Thy mind at once capacious and humane,
Can view, to truth, to hope immortal dead ?
Thy penetrating reason, subtle, strong,
Hoodwink'd by dark infatuation's veil ;
And all thy fine and manly sense employ'd,
Ev'n on eternity's thrice awful verge,
To trifle with the wonders of a state
Respectably alarming ! of a state
Whose being gives to man—had given to thee
(Accepted by the humble hand of faith)
True glory, solid fame, and boundless wealth !
Treasures that wax not old.

Oh the high blessings of humility !
Man's first and richest grace ! Of virtue, truth,
Knowledge, and exaltation, certain source,
And most abundant : Pregnant of all good ;
And, poor in show, to treasures infinite
Infallibly conducting ; her sure gift !
So, when old Hyems has deform'd the year,
We view, on fam'd Burgundia's craggy cliffs,
The slow vines, scarce distinct, on the brown earth
Neglected lie and grovelling ;—promise poor
From plant so humble, of the swelling grape
In glowing clusters purpling o'er the hills :—

L

When

* See Mr. Hume's Life, written by himself ; with a letter by Dr. Smith, giving an account of his death.

When all impregnating rolls forth the fun,
And from the mean stalk pours a luscious flood
Of juice nectareous thro' the laughing land!

Nervous essayist! haply had thy pen,
Of masculine ability, this theme
Pursued intelligent; from lowly heart
Delineating true the features mild
Of genuine humility; mankind
Now 'wilder'd by thy sophistry, had bless'd
And honour'd well thy teaching: Whilst thyself
Secure had sail'd and happy; nor been cast
On pride's black rocks, or empty scorn's bleak shore!

Proud scorn, how poor and blind—how it at once
Destroys the sight, and makes us think we see!
While desperate ridicule in wit's wild hands
Implants a dangerous weapon! How it warps
From clear discernment, and conclusions just,
Ev'n captive reason's self! How gay soe'er—
(Ah misplac'd gait on such a theme)
In life's last hour!—on Charon's crazy bark,
On Tartarus and Elysium, and the pomp
Solemn and dreaded of dark pagans Hell!
Thy reasoning powers knew well, full well to draw
Deductions true from fables gross as these,
By poets fancy heighten'd! Well thou knew'st
The deep intelligence, the solid truth
Conceal'd beneath the mystic tale; well knew'st
Fables like these, familiar to mankind
In every nation, every clime, thro' earth
Widely disseminate, through earth proclaim'd
In language strong, intelligent and clear,
“A future state retributive:” Thou knew'st,
That in each age the wise embrac'd the truth,
And gloried in an hope, how dim soe'er,
Which thou, amidst the blaze, the noon-day blaze

Of

Of Christian information, madly scorn'dst,
 And died'st insulting! Hail of ancient times,
 Worthies and fam'd believers! Plato, hail!
 And thou, immortal Socrates, of Rome
 Prime ornament and boast! My Tully, hail!
 Friend and companion of my studious life;
 In eloquence and sound philosophy
 Alike superlative!—with minds enlarg'd,
 Yet teachable and modest, how ye sought,
 You and your kindred souls,—how daily dug
 For wisdom as the labourer in the mines!
 How grop'd, in fancy's and dark fable's night,
 Your way assiduous, painful! How discern'd
 By the mind's trembling, unassisted light,—
 (Or, haply, aided by a scatter'd ray
 Of distant revelation, half extinct)
 The glimmer of a dawn; the twinkling star
 Of day-light far remote! How sigh'd sincere
 For fuller information! and how long'd,
 How panted for admission to that world
 O'er which hung veils impervious! Sages, yes,
 Your search ingenuous proves it: every page
 Immortal of your writings speaks this truth!
 Hear, ye minute philosophers; ye herd
 Of mean half-thinkers, who chief glory place
 In boldness to arraign and judge your God,
 And think that singularity is sense!
 Hear, and be humbled: Socrates himself*—
 And him you boast your master,—would have fall'n
 In humble, thankful reverence at the feet
 Of Jesus, and drank wisdom from his tongue!

Divineſt Fountain! from the copious ſtream

L 2

Then

* Alluding to his celebrated wiſh of divine illumination from ſome ſuperior power.

Then drink we freely, gladly, plenteous draughts
 Of ever-living wisdom ; knowledge clear,
 And otherwise attainless of that state
 Supernal, glorious ; where, in angel-form
 And angel-blessedness *, from Death's dread pow'r,
 From Sin's dominion, and from Sorrow's sense
 Emancipated ever, we shall share
 Complete, uninterrupted, boundless bliss ;
 Incessant flowing forth from God's right hand,
 Well of perennial joy † ! Our moral powers,
 By perfect pure benevolence enlarg'd,
 With universal sympathy, shall glow
 Love's flame ethereal ! And from God himself,
 Love's primal source, and ever-blessing sun,
 Receive, and round communicate the warmth
 Of gladness and of glory ! Then shall rule,
 From dregs of sordid interest defecate,
 Immortal friendship. Then too shall we trace—
 With minds congenial and a thirst for truth
 Sincere and simple, the Creator's works,
 Illumin'd by the intellectual soul,
 Refin'd, exalted !—Animating thought !
 'To talk with Plato, or with Newton tread
 'Thro' empyrean space the boundless track
 Of stars erratic, or the comet vague
 With fiery lustre wandering thro' the depths
 Of the blue void, exhaustless, infinite ;
 While all its wonders, all its mystic use,
 Expand themselves to the admiring sight !
 Descending then from the celestial range
 Of planetary worlds, how blest to walk
 And trace with thee, nature's true lover, Hale,
 —In science sage and venerable—trace

Thro'

* ἁγγελοι.

† See Psalm xiv. 12.

Thro' vegetation's principle, the God !
 Read in each tube, capillary, and root,
 In every leaf and blossom, fruit and flower,
 Creative energy, consummate art,
 Beauty and bounty blended and complete !
 Oh what a burst of wisdom and delight,
 Intelligence and pleasure, to engage
 'Th' enraptur'd mind for ages ! 'T were too short
 Eternity itself, with reasoning quest
 To search, to contemplate great nature's God
 Thro' all his nature's works ! Suns, stars, and skies,
 With all their vast and elemental store :
 Seas, with their finny myriads : birds that wing
 With glittering pinions the elastic air,
 And fill the woods with music : Animals,
 That feed, that clothe, that labour for their lord,
 Proud man ; and half up to his reason climb
 By instinct marvellous ! Fruits, that infinite
 In glow and taste refresh creation's toil ;
 And flowers, that rich in scent their incense sweet
 —Delicious offering both to God and man,—
 Breathe free from velvet variegated hues,
 And speak celestial kindness then from these
 His lesser wonders—Fam'd anatomists,
 Ye, who with scrupulous, but still painful search,
 Pore doubtful in the dark recess of life ;—
 Then turn we, Cheselden, to man ; so form'd
 With fear and wonder by the master-hand,
 And learn we, from discovery of the springs
 Of this divine automaton : the blood
 In nimble currents coursing thro' the veins
 And purple arteries ; the fibres fine ;
 The tubal nerves, so ramified and quick
 To keen sensation ; all the various parts

So complicate, yet distinct; adapted each
 Its functions with minuteness to fulfil,
 While to the one great end concurring all
 With harmony unvarying!—Learn we hence
 The wisdom exquisite, which gave to life,
 To motion, this his prime, his chief machine!
 And superadded, in his love's display,
 The soul's superior, intellectual rule,
 Connection wonderful! and till that hour
 Of all-expanding knowledge, to man's mind
 Inexplicable still, and still unknown!

How rise upon the thought, to truth attent,
 Truths new and interesting, 'midst this field
 Of universal science!—Nor shall then
 The spirits seat and influence on our frame,
 Gross and material, be alone evolv'd
 To our astonish'd view. Spirit itself,
 Its nature, properties, distinctions, powers,
 —Deep subject of investigation deep,
 And chief resolver of man's anxious doubts;
 Tho' to his sight impossible, or search,
 While darken'd by mortality—shall rise,
 Soon as he bursts the barrier of the grave,
 Clear and familiar on his sight enlarg'd:
 Seen in himself, beatify'd, and cloth'd
 With spiritual glory: in the angelic world
 Seen and admir'd. And—oh ecstatic view,
 Whose sight is perfect bliss, transforming, pure*,—
 Seen

* There must be sympathy in the future state, to render it uniformly complete and perfect. We can have no pleasure in God, or God in us, but from that sympathy arising from similitude. We must be made like God, to enjoy beatific vision. Bring a bad man to Heaven, with a soul en-
 crusted

Seen and ador'd in Thee, great first and last,
 Sole, self-existing Thou the gracious cause
 Of all existence ; Infinitely blest,
 Yet pleas'd with life and being to impart
 That blessing to innumerable creatures round !
 Spirit of the universe, thro' all diffus'd,
 And animating all ! Dread Triune God *,
 With beams exhaustless of eternal love,
 Of life, of glory, from thy central throne
 Shining beneficent ; and kindling warm
 In every being subject to thy rule,
 Devotion's rapture and thanksgiving's song ;
 Mellifluous songs, and hallelujah's high !

New wonders elevate ! For not alone
 By contemplation up to nature's God
 From nature's works ascending, shall the soul
 Beatified receive in future bliss
 Accessions of delight thro' endless day :—
 Lo, what a scene, engaging and profound,
 Presents itself, the darkening curtain drawn—
 From the high acts of Providence, display'd
 In one clear view consistent ; in one end
 Important, grand, centering : one design.
 Superlatively gracious, through the whole
 Pursued invariably ; even from the hour

When

crusted and sensualized, he would have no pleasure in it ;
 nor could he endure the sight, any more than reptiles that
 grovel in a cave amidst filth and darkness, could endure the
 splendours of the mid-day sun. Shakspeare's description is,
 in this view, highly animated :

“ For vice, tho' to a radiant angel link'd,
 “ Would sate itself in a celestial bed,
 “ And prey on garbage.”

* See Maclean's Answer to Jenyns, p. 72.

When pass'd the sentence on the serpent's head,
 To that thrice-awful moment, when the Son
 His victor-car o'er death and hell shall drive
 Triumphant, and bolt fast the gates of time !

Unroll'd the mystic volume, we behold,
 In characters of wisdom strong pourtray'd,
 The rise and fall of empires ; in thy hand
 Omnipotent, or instruments of good,
 Or of thy justice punitive and dread
 Awful dispensers ! There, of heroes, kings,
 Sages, and saints, of prophets and of priests,
 Thy distributions, difficult but wise,
 Discerning, shall we gratefully adore :
 And in the long, long chain of seeming chance,
 And accidents fortuitous, shall trace
 Omniscience all-combining, guiding all !
 No dispensations then will seem too hard,
 Through temporary ills to blissful life
 Leading, tho' labyrinthal ! All will shine
 In open day : all, o'er the mighty plan,
 Discover Thee, with wisdom infinite
 Presiding glorious : All thy steadfast truth,
 And love paternal, manifest ; while falls
 The prostrate world of spirits, angels, saints,
 In adoration's homage 'fore thy throne !

Not to our earth, or earth's poor confines bound :
 The soul dilated, glorified and free
 On seraph's wings shall soar, and drink in glad,
 New draughts of high delight from each survey
 Of its Creator's kingdoms ! Pleas'd shall pass
 From star to star ; from planetary worlds,
 And systems far remote, to systems, worlds
 Remoter still, in boundless depths of space ;
 Each peopled with its myriads : and shall learn

The

The wise and strict dependence of the whole ;
 Concatenation striking of thy works,
 All-perfect, mighty Master ! Wonder-lost
 In the vast view of systems numberless,
 All regular, in one eternal round
 Of beauteous order rolling ! All design'd
 With skill consummate, tending to one goal ;
 And manifesting all, in characters
 Transparent as the diamond's brilliant blaze,
 Their Sovereign Ruler's unity of will,
 His all-efficient wisdom, and his love,
 In a grace and glory infinite ; the chain
 Connecting firm, and thro' its every link
 Transfusing life's ineffable delights !
 Oh goodness providential ! sleepless care !
 Intent, as ever blest, to bless the whole !
 What plaudits from that whole are due, shall burst
 From full creation's universal choir !

Then, oh transporting ! shall the scheme profound,
 Heaven's labour, and of angels anxious thought
 Sublimest meditation ;—then shall blaze
 In fullest glory on the race redeem'd,
 Redemption's boundless mercy !—High in Heav'n,
 To millions blest, rejoicing in its grace,
 And hymning all its bounties, shall the cross,
 Thy cross, all-conquering Saviour, be display'd,
 While seraphs veil their glories, and while men
 Thronging innumerable, prostrate fall
 Before thy feet, and to the bleeding Lamb
 Ascribe their free salvation !—

'Midst that throng
 Of spirits justified, and thro' thy blood
 Cleans'd, perfected, and blest, might I be found,
 To scenes so high exalted ; to such views
 Ennobling

Ennobling brought, such intellect refin'd,
 Such light and love, such holiness and peace ;
 Such spheres of science, and such realms of rest !
 Ah, how I'd scorn the passage strait of death,
 How doleful e'er and horrid ! How I'd look
 With steadfastness unshaken thro' the grave,
 And smile o'er all its sadness ! How I'd rise
 Exulting, great Forerunner, o'er the waves
 And bitterness of life ! How, smiling, court
 Ev'n the fell hand of horror, to dismiss
 From earth, from darkness, my delighted soul
 To Heaven, to God, and everlasting day !

Teacher of truth, blest Jesu !—On the throne,
 Of majesty co-equal thou who sitt'st
 From all eternity in glory's blaze
 With thy Almighty Father ! Thou, benign,
 From bosom of that Father hast brought down
 Intelligence to man of this blest state
 Consolatory, rational ; and fraught
 With every good beyond the highest reach
 Of man's supreme conception ! How shall then
 In equal language man his homage pay,
 Or grateful laud thy goodness ! Sons of Greece,
 Or ye, who in old times, of sevenfold Nile,
 Proud Tyber, or the Ganges' sacred flood
 Religious drank, and to your demons dark
 Paid superstition's tribute ;—tho' I trace
 Delighted, in your visions of the world
 Beyond the grave, your dreams of future life,—
 Proofs of that life's firm credence, of your faith
 In the soul's deathless nature ;—yet with tears
 Of human pity, humbled o'er the sense
 Of human imbecility, I read
 Your futile fables, puerile and poor ;

To

To the soul's life, to virtue's godlike love
 Unanimating, useleſs ; while illum'd
 By goſpel-ſplendour,—eſe, no doubt, as dark
 And worthy pity—owns my heart rejoic'd,
 That goſpel's eminence of wiſdom, truth,
 And heavenly emanation, in its traits
 Of future life ſuperlatively drawn !

And who could paint that life, that ſcene deſcribe
 Immortal, and all-glorious, from the view
 Of mortals ſhrowded ever,—ſave the Son,
 Who from Eternity that life enjoyed ;
 And came in condeſcenſion to reveal
 A glipſe of its perfection to mankind ?

Preſumption vain and arrogant in man,
 To think of ſketching with his weak, faint line,
 A ſcene ſo much above him ! And behold
 That vain preſumption puniſh'd as it ought,
 In Araby's Impoſtor, dark and lewd ;
 Who dar'd, with temporary follies fraught,
 And low ſelf-intereſt, ſtalking in the van
 Of mad ambition's route—to cheat his train,
 Deluded by his darings, with the hope
 Of ſenſual raviſhment, and carnal joys
 Perpetual in the Paradife of God ;
 Reſerv'd—for ſons of murder and of luſt !

Shame on the impious madneſs !—Nor leſs ſhame
 Muſt truth indignant dart on thoſe who boaſt
 Exclusive Chriſtianity ; yet dare,
 Preſumptuous, in their fancied penal fire
 To ſetter the free ſoul, “ till the foul ſins
 “ Done in its days of nature be purged out
 “ And burn'd away * ;” unleſs by lucky chance

The

* See Hamlet.

The oft-repeated mass, thro' potent gold,—
 All sacred influence !—gain'd, unlocks the door
 Of dismal prison-house, and gives the soul
 Enfranchis'd, up to Peter's better care !

Preposterous, weak delusion ! strange reproach
 To Christian sapience, and to manly sense !
 But not to Christ's true gospel, and the code
 Of Revelation pure ; before whose light,
 Resplendently informing, fables old
 Like these, and vain (of ignorance the birth,
 Or coinage sacerdotal, in an age
 Of gross Cimmerian darkness), growling hide
 Their ignominious heads : as birds of night,
 Reptiles, and beasts of prey before the sun
 Mounting the misty hills, in splendour rob'd,
 And beaming all around refulgent day !

Other, far other from that luminous code
 Breaks on the rational, enlighten'd mind
 In perfect beauty that exalted state,
 Of whose high excellence our sight hath dar'd,
 How dim soe'er, to take an humble glimpse,
 And peep into its wonders !—But what tongue
 Of man in language adequate can tell,
 What mortal pencil worthily pourtray
 That excellence, those wonders—where nor death,
 Nor sin, nor pain shall enter ever ;—where,
 Each ill excluded, every good shall reign ;
 Where day shall ne'er decline ; but ceaseless light
 —The Lamb's eternal lustre—blazing bless
 With salutary glory ! where shall smile
 One spring unvarying ; and glad nature teem
 Spontaneous with exuberance of bounty !
 Where, in immortal health, the frame sublim'd,
 Refin'd, exalted thro' the chymic grave,

In union with the soul made perfect, pure,
 And to the likeness of its God transform'd,
 Shall find for every sense divine employ,
 Gratification ample, exquisite,
 Angelical, and holy : Chief in sight,
 In vision beatific of its God ;
 In blest communion of his love ; in praise
 High choral praise, strung to the golden harp
 In unison eternal, with the throng,
 Thousands of thousands that surround the throne,
 And feel his praise, their glory, and their bliss !

There too his works constant th' adoring soul
 Shall pleas'd investigate ; and constant find
 Fresh well-spring of delight ; there constant share
 The lov'd society and converse high
 Of all the good, the wise the truly great
 Of every age and clime ; with saints and seers
 Divine communication holding, rapt
 Perpetually in new and deep displays
 Of wisdom boundless, and of perfect love.
 Then too, oh joy ! amidst this blaze of good,
 This consummation rich of highest bliss ;
 Then shall we meet,—meet never more to part,
 Dear, dear departed friends ! and then enjoy,
 Eternal amity. My parents then,
 My youth's companions * ?—From my moisten'd
 cheeks

Dry the unworthy tear ! Where art thou, Death ?
 Is this a cause for mourning ?—What a state
 Of happiness exalted lies before me !
 Lo, my bar'd bosom ! Strike : I court the blow :
 I long, I pant for everlasting day,

M

For

* See Thoughts on the Epiphany, ver. 331, &c.

For glory, immortality and God!

But, ah! why droops my soul? why o'er me thus
Comes a chill cloud? Such triumph well befits
The faithful Christian; thee had suited well,
If haply persevering in the course,
As first thy race exultingly began.
But thou art fallen, fallen! Oh my heart,
What dire compunction!—sunk in foul offence
A prisoner, and condemn'd: an outcast vile;
Bye-word and scorn of an indignant world,
Who reprobate with horror thy ill deeds;
Turn from thee loath'd, and to damnation just
Assign, unpitying, thy devoted head,
Loaded with every infamy!

Dread God

Of Justice and of Mercy! wilt thou too,
In fearful indignation on my soul,
My anguish'd soul, the door of pity close,
And shut me from thee ever?—Lo! in dust,
Humiliant, prostrate, weeping 'fore thy throne—
Before thy cross, oh dying Friend of man,
Friend of repentant sinners, I confess,
And mourn my deep transgressions; as the sand
Innumerable, as the glowing crimson red:
With every aggravation, every guilt
Accumulate and burden'd! Against light,
'Gainst love and clearest knowledge perpetrate!
Stamp'd with ingratitude's most odious stain;
Ingratitude to thee; whose favouring love
Had bless'd me, had distinguish'd me with grace,
With goodness far beyond my wish or worth!
Ingratitude to man; whose partial ear
Attended to my doctrine with delight;
And from my zeal conspicuous justly claim'd

Conspicuous

Conspicuous example !——Lord, I sink
 O'erwhelm'd with self-conviction, with dismay,
 With anguish and confusion past compare !
 And could I weep whole seas of briny tears
 In painful penitence ; could I deplore
 From my heart's aching fountain, drop by drop,
 My crimes and follies ; my deep grief and shame,
 For vile dishonour on thy gospel brought ;
 For vile discredit to my order done ;
 For deep offence against my country's laws !
 For deep offence to pity and to man,—
 A patriarchal age would be too short
 To speak my sorrows and lament my sins ;
 Chief, as I am of finners ! Guiltier far
 Than he who, falling, at the cock's shrill call
 Rose, and repented weeping : guiltier far—
 I dare not say, than Judas ; for my heart
 Hath ever lov'd,—could never have betray'd
 Oh never, never Thee, dear Lord ! to death ;
 Tho' cruelly, unkindly and unwise
 That heart hath sacrific'd its truth and peace,
 —For what a shameful, what a paltry price !—
 To sin, detested sin ; and done thee wrong,
 Oh blessed source of all its good, its hope !
 For, tho' thus sunk, thus sinful, sorrowing thus,
 It dare not, cannot Judas' crime commit,
 Last crime,—and of thy mercy, Lord, despair !
 But, conscious of its guilt ; contrite and plung'd
 In lowest self-abjection, in the depths
 Of sad compunction, of repentance due
 And undissembled, to thy cross it cleaves,
 And cries for—ardent cries for mercy, Lord !
 Mercy, its only refuge ! Mercy, Christ !
 By the red drops that in the garden gush'd

'Midst thy soul's anguish from thee ! By the drops
 That down thy precious temples from the crown
 Of agony distill'd ! By those that flow'd
 From thy pierc'd hands and blessed feet so free ;
 By all thy blood, thy sufferings, and thy death,
 Mercy, oh Mercy, Jesus ! Mercy Thou,
 Who erst on David, with a clement eye,
 When mourning at thy footstool, deigns to look,
 Thou, who th' adulterous Magdalen forgav'st,
 When in the winning garb of penitence
 Contrite she knelt, and with her flowing tears
 Wash'd lowly thy lov'd feet ! Nor thou the thief,
 Ev'n in the last, the bitterest hour of pain,
 Refusedst, gracious ! Nor wilt thou refuse
 My humble supplication, nor reject
 My broken bleeding heart, thus offer'd up
 On true contrition's altar ; while thro' Thee,
 Only thro' Thee acceptance do I hope,
 'Thou bleeding love ! consummate Advocate,
 Prevailing Intercessor, great High Priest,
 Almighty Sufferer ! Oh look pitying down !
 On thy sufficient merits I depend ;
 From thy unbounded mercies I implore
 The look of pardon and the voice of grace,—
 Grace, Grace !—Victorious Conqueror over sin,
 O'er death, o'er Hell, for me, for all mankind ;
 For grace I plead : repentant at thy feet
 I throw myself, unworthy, lost, undone ;
 Trusting my soul, and all its dear concerns,
 With filial resignation to thy will :
 Grace,—still on grace my whole reliance built :
 Glory to grace triumphant !—And to thee,
 Dispenser bounteous of that sovereign grace !
 Jesus, thou King of glory ! at thy call

I come

I come obedient : lo, the future world
 Expands its views transporting ! Lord, I come ;
 And in that world eternal trust to 'plaud,
 With all redemption's sons, thy glorious grace !

Then farewell, oh, my friends ! light o'er my grave
 The green sod lay, and dew it with the tear
 Of memory affectionate ! and you

—The curtain drop decisive, oh my foes,
 Your rancour drop ; and, candid, as I am
 Speak of me, hapless ! Then you'll speak of one
 Whose bosom beat at pity's gentlest touch
 From earliest infancy : whose boyish mind
 In acts humane and tender ever joy'd ;
 And who,—that temper by his inmost sense
 Approv'd and cultivate with constant care,—
 Melted thro' life at Sorrow's plaintive tale,
 And urg'd, compassionate with pleasure ran
 To sooth the sufferer and relieve the woe !
 Of one, who, though to humble fortune bred,
 With splendid generosity's bright form
 Too ardently enamour'd, turn'd his sight,
 Deluded, from frugality's just care,
 And parsimony needful ! One who scorn'd
 Mean love of gold, yet to that power,—his scorn
 Retorting vengeful,—a mark'd victim fell !
 Of one, who, unsuspecting, and ill-form'd
 For the world's subtleties, his bare breast bore
 Unguarded, open ; and ingenuous, thought
 All men ingenuous, frank and open too !
 Of one, who, warm with human passions, soft
 To tenderest impressions, frequent rush'd
 Precipitate into the tangling maze
 Of error ;—instant to each fault alive
 Who, in his little journey thro' the world—

Missed, deluded oft, mistook his way ;
 Met with bad roads and robbers, for his steps
 Infidious lurking : and by cunning craft
 Of fellow-travellers sometimes deceiv'd,
 Severely felt of cruelty and scorn,
 Of envy, malice, and of ill report *,
 The heavy hand oppressive ! One who brought
 —From ignorance, from indiscretion blind,—
 Ills numerous on his head ; but never aim'd,
 Nor wish'd an ill or injury to man !
 Injur'd, with cheerful readiness forgave ;

Nor

* The following is a striking instance, and an alarming proof, that calumny and slander will one day grievously afflict the conscious mind.—A clergyman, with whom I had lived in much friendship, always ready to show him every proof of civility, and for whom I had much esteem, after an absence of a twelvemonth and more, sent me a line, that he was then in a dangerous state, apprehensive of a speedy death. I flew to my friend with all zeal and speed; and found him, as it seemed, in a very dangerous way. Almost as soon as he saw me he burst into tears, and clasping my hands vehemently, said, "Oh, my dear Doctor, I could not die in peace without seeing you, and earnestly imploring your pardon: For amidst all the seeming friendship I showed, I have been your bitter enemy: I have done all I could on every occasion to traduce and lessen you; envy, base envy alone, being my motive; for I could not bear the brilliancy of your reputation, and the splendour of your abilities.—Can you forgive me?"

I was shocked; but with great truth told him to be perfectly at peace; that he had my most sincere forgiveness.—I did all I could to sooth his mind. He recovered, and surely must ever be my friend! Would to God what he then suffered may be a warning to him, and to all, how they indulge such diabolical passions; which, as being most opposite to the God who is love, cannot but sooner or later woefully distract the heart!

Nor for a moment in his happy heart
 Harbour'd of malice or revenge a thought ;
 Still glad and blest to avenge his foes despite
 By deeds of love benevolent !—Of one—
 Oh painful contradiction, who in God,
 In duty, plac'd the summit of his joy ;
 Yet left that God, that blissful duty left,
 Preposterous, vile deserter ! and receiv'd
 A just return—" Desertion from his God,
 " And consequential plunge into the depth
 " Of all his present—of all human woe !"

Then hear his sufferings ! Hear (if found too faint
 His feeble song to win attention) hear
 And heed his dying counsel ! Cautious, shun
 The rocks on which he split. Cleave close to God,
 Your Father, sure Protector, and Defence :
 Forsake not his lov'd service ; and your cause
 Be sure he'll ne'er forsake. Initiate once
 Happy and prosperous, in religion's course
 Oh persevere unfainting ! Nor to vice
 Or tempting folly slightest parley give :
 Their black tents never enter : On the watch
 Continue unremitting, nor e'er slack
 The necessary guard. Trivial neglects,
 Smallest beginnings *, to the wakeful foe
 Open the door of danger ;—and down sinks,
 Thro' the minutest leak once sprung, the ship
 In gayest and most gallant tackle trim.
 By small neglects he fell !—

Oh

* Principiis obsta : sero medicina paratur,
 Cum mala per longas convaluere moras.
 Sed propera ; nec te venturas differ in horas.
 Quil non est hodie, cras minus aptus erit.

Oh could ye rise
 Blest ministers of peace, by his sad fall :
 Gather increase of caution and of zeal ;
 And, seeing on what slippery edge ye stand,
 Of foul and fatal lapse take the more heed ;—
 With deeper thankfulness he'd bow the knee,
 While thus his fate productive prov'd of good
 To you, of truth blest heralds ! whom he views
 With heart-felt anguish scandaliz'd, impugn'd
 By his atrocious follies : But for that
 Not honour'd less, or honourable, if rous'd,
 Ev'n by his errors, wisely you maintain
 Your high profession's dignity, and look
 With single eye intent on the great work
 Thrice holy, of your calling ; happiest work
 Of mortals here, " Salvation of men's souls."

Oh envied pastor, who thus occupied
 Looks down on low preferment's distant views
 Contemptible ; nor e'er his plotting mind
 To little, mean servilities enslaves ;
 Forgetting duty's exercise sublime,
 And his attachments heavenly ! Who nor joins
 In frivolous converse on the rise of this,
 Nor prospects flattering of that worldly clerk ;
 Strange inconsistency ! marching aloft
 With step superior and ambition's paw
 To dignity's wish'd summit !—Nor allows
 Envious, or spreads malicious the low tales
 Diminishing of brethren, who by zeal,
 Or eminence of merit in the cause,
 The common cause of Christ distinguish'd shine :
 Of futile politics and party rage
 Who, heedless, ever for the powers that be
 In meek sincerity implores ; and lives

Only

Only to spread around the good, the peace,
 The truth, the happiness, his open heart
 Innocuous possesses, as the gift
 Of him the God of peace he serves and loves !

Much envied pastor ! Ah, ye men of God,
 Who crowd the levee, theatre, or court ;
 Foremost in each amusement's idle walk ;
 Of vice and vanity the sportive scorn,
 The vaunted pillars ;—ah that ye were all
 Such happy, envied pastors ! how mankind
 With eyes of reverence would devoutly look,
 How would yourselves with eyes of pleasure look
 On characters so uniform ! while now,
 What view is found less pleasing to the sight !

Nor wonderful, my aged friends ! For none
 Can inward look complacent where a void
 Presents its desolations drear and dark.
 Hence 'tis you turn (incapable to bear
 Reflection's just resentment) your lull'd minds
 To infantine amusements, and employ
 The hours,—short hours, indulgent Heaven affords
 For purposes most solemn,—in the toil
 Of busy trifling ; of diversions poor,
 Which irritate as often as amuse :
 Passions most low and sordid ! With due shame,
 With sorrow I regret—Oh pardon me
 This mighty wrong !—that frequent by your side
 Silent I've sat, and with a pitying eye
 Your follies mark'd, and unadmonish'd left,
 Tho' tenderly lamenting ! Yet, at last,
 —If haply not too late my friendly call
 Strike on dead ears, oh profit by that call !
 And, to the grave approaching, its alarms
 Weigh with me all considerate ! Brief time

Advances

Advances quick in tread ; few hours and dark
 Remain : those hours in frivolous employ
 Waste not impertinent ; they ne'er return !
 Nor deem it dullness to stand still and pause
 When dread eternity hath claims so high.
 Oh be those claims fulfill'd !

Nor, my young friends,
 Whom life's gay sunshine warms with laughing joy,
 Pass you those claims unheeding !—In the bud
 Of earliest rose oft have I sorrowing seen
 The canker-worm lurk blighting ; oft, ere noon,
 The tulip have beheld drop its proud head
 In eminent beauty open'd to the morn !
 In youth, in beauty, in life's outward charms
 Boast not self-flattering ; virtue has a grace,
 Religion has a power, which will preserve
 Immortal your true excellence ! O give
 Early and happy your young hearts to God,
 And God will smile in countless blessings on you !
 Nor, captivate by fashion's idle glare,
 And the world's shows delusive, dance the maze,
 The same dull round, fatiguing and fatigu'd,
 Till, discontented, down in folly's seat
 And disappointment's, worthless, toil'd, you sink,
 Despising and despis'd ! Your gentle hearts
 To kind impressions yet susceptible,
 Will amiably hear a friend's advice ;
 And if, perchance, amidst the giddy whirl
 Of circling folly, his unheeded tongue
 Hath whisper'd vanity, or not announc'd
 Truth's salutary dictates to your ears,
 Forgive the injury, my friends belov'd ;
 And see me now, solicitous t' atone
 That and each fault, each error ; with full eyes
 Entreating

Entreating you, by all your hopes and fears,
 By all your dear anxieties ; by all
 You hold in life most precious, to attend,
 To listen to his lore ! to seek for bliss
 In God, in piety ; in hearts devote
 To duty and to Heav'n ! and seeking thus
 The treasure is your own. Angels on earth,
 Thus pure and good, soon will you mount, and live
 Eternal angels with your Father—God !

Of admonition due, just self-contempt,
 And frank expostulation's honest charge,
 The needful debt thus paid ; haste thou, my song,
 As hastes my life,—brief shadow,—to its close !

Then farewell, oh my friends, most valued !
 bound

By consanguinity's endearing tie,
 Or friendship's noble service, manly love,
 And generous obligations ! See, in all
 —And spare the tear of pity—Heaven's high will
 Ordaining wise and good. I see, I own
 His dispensation, howsoever harsh,
 To my hard heart, to my rebellious soul
 Needful and salutary ! His dread rod
 Paternal, lo I kiss ; and to the stroke
 Severe, submissive thankfully resign !
 It weans me from the world ; it proves how vain,
 How poor the life of erring man ! hath taught,
 Experimentally hath taught, to look
 With scorn, with triumph upon death ;—to wish
 The moment come !—Oh were that moment come,
 When, launch'd from all that's sinful here below,
 Securely I shall sail along the tide
 Of glorious eternity ! My friends,
 Belov'd and honour'd, oh that we were launch'd,
 And

And sailing happy there, where shortly all
 Must one day fail ! Oh that in peaceful port
 We all were landed ! all together safe
 In everlasting amity and love
 With God, our God ; our pilot thro' the storms
 Of this life's sea !—But, why the frivolous wish ?
 Set a few suns,—a few more days decline,
 And I shall meet you.—Oh the gladfome hour !
 Meet you in glory,—nor with flowing tears
 Afflicted drop my pen, and sigh Adieu ?

END OF THE FIFTH WEEK.

✂ In a Postscript to a friend, the Author writes thus:—
 I forgot to request my good friend to tell Mr. HANWAY,
 that in one of my little melancholy Poems, written in this
 dreary place, I have made such mention of him as I think
 his attention to the improvement of jails demands:—That
 I earnestly press him, as a Christian and a Man, to pursue
 that improvement with zeal:—That much, very much is to
 be done:—And that while the state of prisons remains as it
 is, the legislature has some reason to charge itself with the
 greater part of the robberies, &c. committed: For the of-
 fenders for petty crimes are here hardened in almost every
 species of vice, and turned out, necessary plunderers of the
 public, from the depravity of their unaltered disposition, and
 the deficiency of proper employment. I have felt much on
 this subject since I have been here, and expressed something
 of it in the Poem, Week the Third. See page 66, 67, &c.

PIECES

FOUND AMONGST THE AUTHOR'S PAPERS
IN PRISON,

WITH

HIS LAST PRAYER.

I. THE ADMONITION.

AFFLICTED prisoner, whosoe'er thou art,
To this lone room unhappily confin'd ;
Be thy first business here to search thy heart,
And probe the deep corruptions of thy mind !

Struck with the foul transgressions thou hast
wrought,

With sin,—the source of all thy worldly woe ;
To shame, to sorrow, to conviction brought,
Oh, fall before the throne of mercy low !

With true Repentance pour thy soul in prayer,
And fervent plead the Saviour's cleansing blood ;
Faith's ardent cry will pierce the Father's ear,
And Christ's a plea which cannot be withstood !

N

II. SCRIP.

II. SCRIPTURE-PENITENTS.

A FRAGMENT.

FIRST in the list of penitents we place
 The sinful parent of our sinful race;
 Who, by temptation foil'd, and man's first foe,
 " Brought death into the world, and all our woe!"
 Transgression's debt how deeply does he pay!
 Depriv'd of innocence; to death a prey;
 From Paradise expell'd; to toil assign'd,—
 Toil of the fainting frame and sick'ning mind!
 And doom'd to shed, for near a thousand years,
 O'er fall'n descendants penitential tears!

Thus seiz'd the triple league * on mortal man,
 And thus, Repentance, thy sad reign began.

Yet, awful Power! how blest beneath thy sway,
 Who feel Contrition's dictates, and obey!
 Their vicious deviations who detest,
 And hold Faith's cross, all-humbled, to their
 breast! [fly †;

From God's lov'd presence then they need not
 Nor ope in wrath the flood-gates of the sky:

For since to man perfection was deny'd,
 By thee his deep demerits are supply'd;
 And, led by thee a suppliant to the throne,
 The God of mercy looks with pity down,
 Smiles on the mourner, and delights to prove
 How free his grace, and how triumphant love!

Eternal proof! See, bath'd in floods of tears,
 Where David foremost in thy train appears:

How

* Sin, Sorrow, and Death. † As Cain, Gen. iv. 14, 16.

How deep his crime, the prophet pictures well ;
 How deep his penitence, those sorrows tell !
 That, whether to deplore the crime, or bless,
 We stand suspended ; since its evil less,
 Less bright his soul's ingenuous grief had shone,
 And less at once his comfort, and our own !

Hear, like a torrent how his sorrows roll,
 Conviction's tempest tearing up his soul !
 Hear, sad and solemn, to the mournful strings,
 In trembling anguish, how he weeps and sings !

" Mercy, oh mercy, Lord ! with humble heart !

" For thy known pity's sake, mercy I pray !

" Boundless in tender mercies as Thou art,

" Take, Lord ! oh take my foul offence away !

" Oh, from my loathsome guilt, wash, cleanse my
 " soul,

" Remove, dear Father, each defiling stain :

" Guilty, oh, guilty, Lord ! I own the whole ;

" I see, I feel it ; all excuse is vain.

" Against Thee, Lord ! ev'n Thee, have I trans-
 " gress'd ;

" Lo, self-convicted, I before Thee fall !

" Just are thy words ; their truth is thus confess'd ;

" Just are thy judgments ! Sinners are we all.

" Prone to offend, or ere to birth I came,

" My mother, when conceiving, gave me guilt ;

" Shapen in sin was my corrupted frame, [built.

" When in the womb that wondrous frame was

" But Thou, of purer eyes than guilt to view,

" Thou wilt accept the soul's sincere desire ;

" Pardon the past, the humbled heart renew,

" And wisdom by thy secret one inspire.

- " Then listen to my cry ; and oh, My God,
 " Purge me with hyssop, and I pure shall grow ;
 " Wash me, foul leper, in the mystic blood,
 " And whiter I shall be than whitest snow.
 " Again the voice of gladness let me hear,
 " Thy voice of pardoning love, for it is sweet :
 " The soul dejected so shalt thou uprear,—
 " The worm which, crush'd, lies trembling at
 " thy feet.
 " Hide from my sins,—the objects of thy hate,—
 " Oh, hide thy face, and blot them from thy
 " view :
 " A clean heart, God of grace, in me create,
 " And a right spirit in my soul renew !
 " From thy lov'd presence let me not be driven ;
 " Let me not lose thy blessed spirit's aid ;
 " Again the joy of thy salvation giv'n,
 " Uphold, support, sustain my heart dismay'd.
 " Then, of thy pardoning mercy satisfy'd,
 " Thy pardoning mercy loud will I proclaim :
 " So shall transgressors, taught by me, confide
 " In thy compassions ; turn, and bless thy name.
 " Ah ! my soul shudders !—From the guilt of
 " blood,
 " Oh, from blood-guiltiness deliver me !
 " Oh God, deliver—my salvation's God,
 " And praise unceasing will I pay to thee.
 " Permit my lips, now clos'd by guilt and shame,
 " Thy pardoning love, Jehovah, to express ;
 " Then to thy list'ning world I'll tell thy name,
 " Proclaim thy praise, and sing thy righteous-
 " ness.

For

- " For crimes like mine no offerings can atone ;
 " The gift of outward sacrifice is vain :
 " Could these avail, before thy righteous throne,
 " Whole hecatombs I gladly would have slain.
 " The contrite spirit and the sighs sincere,
 " Which from the broken bleeding heart arise,
 " To thee more pleasing sacrifices are :
 " Are gifts, my God, which thou wilt not despise.
 " Hear then, and save ! and to my people, Lord,
 " Thy saving mercy graciously extend !
 " Oh let our Zion live in thy regard ;
 " The walls of our Jerusalem defend !
 " So shall the righteous to thy temple go,
 " And joyful bring their offering and their praise :
 " So shall the blood of lambs in plenty flow,
 " And incense on thy altar copious blaze *.

With joy, with grief, the penitent I see,
 Offending Heav'n, yet Heav'n-absolv'd for me !
 Oh while, like his, I feel my guilt and shame,
 Be my repentance and my grief the same ! [mine;
 Then shall the truth which cheer'd his heart be
 Thy God has pardon'd thee, and life is thine.

But hark, my soul, what melancholy sound
 Re-echoes from the dungeon's dark profound !
 Hear, sympathetic hear : A King complains,
 Fall'n from his throne, a prisoner, and in chains !

- " God of the world, at length thy rule I own,
 " And prostrate fall before thy boundless throne :
 " Thy power resistless, trembling I confess :
 " In threat'nings awful, but in love no less !

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" O what

* See Psalm 51, and Christian's Magazine, vol. iii. p. 134.

" O what a blessing has that love assign'd,
 " By penitence to heal the wounded mind !
 " By penitence to sinners, who like me, [sea,
 " More than th' unnumber'd sands that shore the
 " My crimes acknowledge ; which, of crimson dye,
 " In all their scarlet horrors meet my eye !
 " Oh eye, unworthy of the light of Heav'n :
 " Oh sins too mountainous to be forgiv'n :
 " Oh rebel to the law and love divine,
 " How justly God's severest vengeance thine !
 " But oh, I bend my heart's obedient knee,
 " In supplication, Lord, for grace from Thee !
 " Yes, I have sinn'd, and I confess the whole—
 " Forgive me then, nor cast away my soul !
 " Save me from evil,—from thine anger save,
 " And snatch me from the dark, untimely grave !
 " Friend of the contrite, Thou wilt pardon give :
 " A monument of mercy I shall live !
 " And worthless as I am, for ever prove,
 " That true repentance leads to saving love !
 " That true repentance tunes to praise the heart,
 " And in the choir of Heaven shall bear an ample
 " part * ! "

Thus, by affliction's deep correction taught,
 Manasseh to the Lord for mercy sought :
 By the kind chastening of a Father's rod,
 Brought to the knowledge of himself and God !
 Happy affliction, for such knowledge given ;
 And blest the dungeon which led thus to Heaven !

III. RE.

* See Prayer of Manasseh, in the Apocrypha, next to
 the first book of Maccabees ; and compare 2 Chron. xxxiii.
 21, &c.

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III. REFLECTIONS.

(UNFINISHED.)

HERE, secluse from wordly pleasure,
In this doleful place confin'd,
Come, and let's improve the leisure ;
Meditate my thoughtful mind !

Soul alike and body sharing,
How have I the one forgot !
While for t'other only caring,
Lo ! my miserable lot !

Yet the one I so much cherish,
Doom'd to death when giv'n to life,
Soon, perhaps, must sink and perish,
Dust to dust—must end the strife !

From a tedious tour returning,
Into distant foreign land,
How my anxious heart is burning
News of home to understand !

* * * * *

TO MY FRIENDS,

ESPECIALLY OF

THE CHARITABLE SOCIETIES,

ON THEIR SOLICITUDE.

AH, my lov'd friends ! why all this care for one
To life so lost, so totally undone,
Whose meat and drink are only bitter tears,
Nights pass'd in sorrow, mornings wak'd to cares ;
Whose

Whose deep offence sits heavy on his soul,
And thoughts self-torturing in deep tumult roll!

Could you, by all your labours so humane,
From this dread prison his deliverance gain;
Could you, by kind exertions of your love,
To generous pardon royal mercy move, [head,
Where should he fly? where hide his wretched
With shame so cover'd, so to honour dead?

Spare then the task, and, as he longs to die, }
Set free the captive,—let his spirit fly,
Enlarg'd and happy, to his native sky!
Not doubting mercy from his grace to find,
Who bled upon the cross for all mankind.

But if it must not be,—if Heaven's high will
Ordains him yet a duty to fulfil,
Oh may each breath, while God that breath shall
spare,

Be yours in gratitude, be Heaven's in prayer!
Deep as his sin, and low as his offence,
High be his rise thro' humblest penitence!

While, life or death, mankind at least shall learn
From his sad story, and your kind concern,
That works of mercy, and a zeal to prove
By sympathetic aid the heart of love,
On earth itself a sure reward obtain;
Nor e'er fall pity's kindly drops in vain!

I live a proof! and dying, round my urn
Affliction's family will crowd and mourn:
"Here rests our friend," if, weeping o'er my grave,
They cry—'tis all the epitaph I crave.

THE
CONVICT'S ADDRESS

TO HIS
UNHAPPY BRETHREN:

DELIVERED IN THE CHAPEL OF NEWGATE, ON FRIDAY,
JUNE 6. 1777,

BY WILLIAM DODD, LL. D.

I acknowledge my Faults: and my Sin is ever before me.

PSALM li. 3.

TO THE
REVEREND MR. VILLETTE,
ORDINARY OF NEWGATE.

Reverend Sir,

THE following Address owes its present public appearance to you. I read it to you after it was composed; and you thought it proper to be delivered, as was intended. You heard it delivered, and are pleased to think that its publication will be useful.—To a poor abject worm, like myself, this is a sufficient inducement to that publication; and I heartily pray God, that in your hands it may frequently and effectually administer to the instruction and comfort of the miserable,

I am, dear SIR,

With my sincerest thanks for your humane
and friendly attention,

Your truly sorrowful
and much afflicted Brother in Christ,

WILLIAM DODD.

Friday, June 6. }
1777.

AN ADDRESS, &c.

My dear and unhappy Fellow-Prisoners,

CONSIDERING my peculiar circumstances and situation, I cannot think myself justified, if I do not deliver to you, in sincere Christian love, some of my serious thoughts on our present awful state.

In the sixteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, you read a memorable story respecting Paul and Silas, who, for preaching the Gospel, were cast by magistrates into prison, ver. 23.—and, after having received many stripes, were committed to the jailor, with a strict charge to keep them safely. Accordingly he thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks. At midnight Paul and Silas, supported by the testimony of a good conscience, prayed, and sung praises to God, and the prisoners heard them; and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's chains were loosed. The keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, in the greatest distress, as might well be imagined, drew his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. But Paul cried with a loud voice, Do thyself

no

no harm, for we are all here.—The keeper calling for a light, and finding his prisoners thus freed from their bonds by the imperceptible agency of divine power, was irresistibly convinced that these men were not offenders against the law, but martyrs to the truth: he sprang in therefore, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and said, “Sirs, “What must I do to be saved?”

“What must I do to be saved?” is the important question, which it becomes every human being to study, from the first hour of reason to the last; but which we, my fellow-prisoners, ought to consider with particular diligence and intenseness of meditation. Had it not been forgotten or neglected by us, we had never appeared in this place. A little time for recollection and amendment is yet allowed us by the mercy of the law. Of this little time let no particle be lost. Let us fill our remaining life with all the duties which our present condition allows us to practise. Let us make one earnest effort for salvation!—And oh! heavenly Father, who desirest not the death of a sinner, grant that this effort may not be in vain.

To teach others what they must do to be saved, has long been my employment and profession. You see with what confusion and dishonour I now stand before you—no more in the pulpit of instruction, but on this humble seat with yourselves.—You are not to consider me now as a man authorised to form the manners, or direct the conscience, and speaking with the authority of a pastor to his flock.—I am here guilty, like yourselves, of a capital offence; and sentenced, like yourselves, to public

and shameful death. My profession, which has given me stronger convictions of my duty than most of you can be supposed to have attained, and has extended my views to the consequences of wickedness farther than your observation is likely to have reached, has loaded my sin with peculiar aggravations; and I entreat you to join your prayers with mine, that my sorrow may be proportionate to my guilt!

I am now, like you, inquiring what I must do to be saved! and stand here to communicate to you what that inquiry suggests. Hear me with attention, my fellow-prisoners; and in your melancholy hours of retirement, consider well what I offer to you from the sincerity of my good will, and from the deepest conviction of a penitent heart.

Salvation is promised to us Christians, on the terms of Faith, Obedience, and Repentance. I shall therefore endeavour to show how, in the short interval between this moment and death, we may exert faith, perform obedience, and exercise repentance, in a manner which our heavenly Father may, in his infinite mercy, vouchsafe to accept.

I. Faith is the foundation of all Christian virtue. It is that, without which it is impossible to please God. I shall therefore consider, first, How faith is to be particularly exerted by us in our present state.

Faith is a full and undoubting confidence in the declarations made by God in the holy Scriptures; a sincere reception of the doctrines taught by our blessed Saviour; with a firm assurance that he died to take away the sins of the world, and that we
O have,

have, each of us, a part in the boundless benefits of the universal Sacrifice.

To this faith we must have recourse at all times, but particularly if we find ourselves tempted to despair. If thoughts arise in our minds, which suggest that we have sinned beyond the hope of pardon, and that therefore it is vain to seek for reconciliation by repentance, we must remember how God willeth that every man should be saved, and that those who obey his call, however late, shall not be rejected.—If we are tempted to think that the injuries we have done are unrepaid, and therefore repentance is vain, let us remember that the reparation which is impossible is not required; that sincerely to will, is to do, in the sight of Him to whom all hearts are open; and that what is deficient in our endeavours, is supplied by the merits of Him who died to redeem us.

Yet let us likewise be careful, lest an erroneous opinion of the all-sufficiency of our Saviour's merits lull us into carelessness and security. His merits are indeed all-sufficient! But he has prescribed the terms on which they are to operate. He died to save sinners, but to save only those sinners that repent. Peter, who denied him, was forgiven; but he obtained his pardon by weeping bitterly. They who lived in perpetual regularity of duty, and are free from any gross or visible transgression, are yet but unprofitable servants:—What then are we, whose crimes are hastening us to the grave before our time?—Let us work with fear and trembling, but still let us endeavour to work out our salvation. Let us hope without presumption; let us fear without desperation; and let our

our faith animate us to that which we were to consider,

Secondly, "Sincere Obedience to the laws of "God." Our obedience, for the short time yet remaining, is restrained to a narrow circle. Those duties, which are called social and relative, are for the most part out of our power. We can contribute very little to the general happiness of mankind, while on those, whom kindred and friendship have allied to us, we have brought disgrace and sorrow. We can only benefit the public by an example of contrition, and fortify our friends against temptation by warning and admonition.

The obedience left us now to practise is, "submission to the will of God, and calm acquiescence in his wisdom and his justice." We must not allow ourselves to repine at those miseries which have followed our offences, but suffer, with silent humility and resigned patience, the punishment which we deserve; remembering that, according to the apostle's decision, no praise is due to them who bear with patience to be buffeted for their fault.

When we consider the wickedness of our past lives, and the danger of having been summoned to the final judgment without preparation, we shall, I hope, gradually rise so much above the gross conceptions of human nature, as to return thanks to God for what once seemed the most dreadful of all evils—our detection and conviction!—We shrink back by immediate and instinctive terror from the public eye, turned as it is upon us with indignation and contempt. Imprisonment is afflictive, and ignominious death is fearful! But let us compare

our condition with that which our actions might reasonably have incurred.—The robber might have died in the act of violence, by lawful resistance; the man of fraud might have sunk into the grave while he was enjoying the gain of his artifice,—and where then had been our hope? We have now leisure for thought; we have opportunities of instruction; and whatever we suffer from offended laws, may yet reconcile ourselves to God, who, if we sincerely seek him, will assuredly be found.

But how are we to seek the Lord? By the way which he himself hath appointed; by humble, fervent, and frequent prayer. Some hours of worship are appointed us; let us duly observe them. Some assistance to our devotion is supplied; let us thankfully accept it. But let us not rest in formality and prescription: let us call upon God night and day. When, in the review of the times which we have past, any offence arises to our thoughts, let us humbly implore forgiveness; and for those faults (and many they are and must be) which we cannot recollect, let us solicit mercy in general petitions. But it must be our constant care that we pray not merely with our lips; but that when we lament our sins, we are really humbled in self-abhorrence*; and that, when we call for mercy, we raise our thoughts to hope and trust in the goodness of God, and the merits of our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ.

The reception of the holy sacrament, to which we shall be called, in the most solemn manner, perhaps a few hours before we die, is the highest act of

* See Job, chap. xlii. ver. 6.

of Christian worship. At that awful moment it will become us to drop for ever all worldly thoughts, to fix our hopes solely upon Christ, whose death is represented, and to consider ourselves as no longer connected with mortality.—And, possibly, it may please God to afford us some consolation, some secret intimations of acceptance and forgiveness. But these radiations of favour are not always felt by the sincerest penitents. To the greater part of those whom angels stand ready to receive, nothing is granted in this world beyond rational hope;—and with hope, founded on promise, we may well be satisfied.

But such promises of salvation are made only to the penitent. It is requisite then that we consider,

Thirdly, “How Repentance is to be exercised.” Repentance, in the general state of Christian life, is such a sorrow for sin as produces a change of manners, and an amendment of life. It is that disposition of mind, by which he who stole steals no more; by which the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness, and doth that which is lawful and right. And to the man thus reformed it is expressly promised, that he shall save his soul alive*. Of this repentance the proofs are visible, and the reality certain, always to the penitent, and commonly to the church with which he communicates;

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* There cannot be a stronger exemplification of this idea than the conduct of the jailor, who uttered the question with which we commenced our inquiry—What shall I do to be saved?—What a change of mind and manners was wrought in him by the power of God! Read Acts, chap. xvi. *hold*

municates; because the state of the mind is discovered by the outward actions.—But of the repentance which our condition requires and admits, no such evidence can appear; for to us many crimes and many virtues are made impossible by confinement; and the shortness of the time which is before us, gives little power even to ourselves, of distinguishing the effects of terror from those of conviction; of deciding, whether our present sorrow for sin proceeds from abhorrence of guilt, or dread of punishment? Whether the violence of our inordinate passions be totally subdued by the fear of God, or only crushed and restrained by the temporary force of present calamity?

Our repentance is like that of other sinners on the death-bed; but with this advantage, that our danger is not greater, and our strength is more. Our faculties are not impaired by weakness of body. We come to the great work not withered by pains, nor clouded by the fumes of disease, but with minds capable of continued attention, and with bodies, of which we need have no care! We may therefore better discharge this tremendous duty, and better judge of our own performance.

Of the efficacy of a death-bed repentance many have disputed; but we have no leisure for controversy. Fix in your minds this decision, “Repentance is a change of the heart; of an evil to a good disposition.” When that change is made, repentance is complete. God will consider that life as amended, which would have been amended, if he had spared it. Repentance in the sight of man, even of the penitent, is not known but by its fruits; but our Creator sees the fruit in the blossom,

blossom, or the seed. He knows those resolutions which are fixed, those conversions which would be permanent; and will receive them who are qualified by holy desires for works of righteousness, without exacting from them those outward duties which the shortness of their lives hindered them from performing.

Nothing therefore remains, but that we apply with all our speed, and with all our strength, to rectify our desires and purify our thoughts; that we set God before us in all his goodness and terrors; that we consider him as the Father and the Judge of all the earth; as a Father, desirous to save; as a Judge, who cannot pardon unrepented iniquity; that we fall down before him self-condemned, and excite in our hearts an intense detestation of those crimes which have provoked him; with vehement and steady resolutions, that if life were granted us, it should be spent hereafter in the practice of our duty*; that we pray the Giver of grace to strengthen and impress these holy thoughts, and to accept our repentance, though late, and in its beginnings violent; that we improve every good motion by diligent prayer; and having declared and confirmed † our faith by the holy communion,—we deliver

* See 2 Cor. ch. v. 14, 15.

† I would have this expression to be particularly attended to—While as a dying man, and with all possible sincerity of soul, I add, that, if I could wish to declare my faith, I know not of any words in which I could do it so well, and so perfectly to my satisfaction, as in the communion-service of our church; and if I would wish to confirm that faith, I know not of any appointed method so thoroughly adapted to that

ver ourselves into his hands, in firm hope, that he who created and redeemed us will not suffer us to perish. *Rom. v. 8. viii. 32.*

The condition, without which forgiveness is not to be obtained, is that we forgive others. There is always a danger lest men, fresh from a trial in which life has been lost, should remember with resentment and malignity the prosecutor, the witnesses, or the judges. It is indeed scarce possible, that with all the prejudices of an interest so weighty and so affecting, the convict should think otherwise than that he has been treated, in some part of the process, with unnecessary severity. In this opinion he is perhaps singular, and therefore probably mistaken. But there is no time for disquisition: we must try to find the shortest way to peace. It is easier to forgive than to reason right. He that has been injuriously or unnecessarily harassed, has one opportunity more of proving his sincerity, by forgiving the wrong, and praying for his enemy.

It is the duty of a penitent to repair, so far as he has the power, the injury which he has done. What we can do, is commonly nothing more than to leave the world an example of contrition. On the dreadful day, when the sentence of the law has its full force, some will be found to have affected a shameless bravery, or negligent intrepidity.

end of participation in that communion itself.—See particularly in this service, the Exhortation, Confession, prayer beginning "We do not presume," &c.—Consecration—and prayer after receiving, "O Lord and heavenly Father," &c.—Convicts should diligently and repeatedly read over the service before they communicate.

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ty. Such is not the proper behaviour of a convicted criminal. To rejoice in tortures is the privilege of a martyr; to meet death with intrepidity is the right only of innocence, if in any human being innocence could be found. Of him whose life is shortened by his crimes, the last duties are humility and self-abasement. We owe to God sincere repentance; we owe to man the appearance of repentance.—We ought not to propagate an opinion, that he who lived in wickedness can die with courage. If the serenity or gaiety with which some men have ended a life of guilt were unfeigned, they can be imputed only to ignorance or stupidity, or, what is more horrid, to voluntary intoxication:—if they were artificial and hypocritical, they are acts of deception, the useless and unprofitable crimes of pride unmortified, and obstinacy unsubdued.

There is yet another crime possible, and, as there is reason to believe, sometimes committed in the last moment, on the margin of eternity.—Men have died with a steadfast denial of crimes, of which it is very difficult to suppose them innocent. By what equivocation or reserve they may have reconciled their consciences to falsehood, if their consciences were at all consulted, it is impossible to know. But if they thought that, when they were to die, they paid their legal forfeit, and that the world had no farther demand upon them; that therefore they might, by keeping their own secrets, try to leave behind them a disputable reputation; and that the falsehood was harmless, because none were injured,—they had very little considered the nature of society. One of the principal parts of national felicity arises from

from a wise and impartial administration of justice. Every man reposes upon the tribunals of his country the stability of possession, and the serenity of life. He therefore who unjustly exposes the courts of judicature to suspicion, either of partiality or error, not only does an injury to those who dispense the laws, but diminishes the public confidence in the laws themselves, and shakes the foundation of public tranquillity.

For my own part, I confess, with deepest compunction, the crime which has brought me to this place; and admit the justice of my sentence, while I am sinking under its severity. And I earnestly exhort you, my fellow-prisoners, to acknowledge the offences which have been already proved; and to bequeath to our country that confidence in public justice, without which there can be neither peace nor safety.

As few men suffer for their first offences, and most convicts are conscious of more crimes than have been brought within judicial cognizance, it is necessary to inquire how far confession ought to be extended. Peace of mind, or desire of instruction, may sometimes demand, that to the minister, whose counsel is requested, a long course of evil life should be discovered: but of this every man must determine for himself.—To the public, every man, before he departs from life, is obliged to confess those acts which have brought, or may bring, unjust suspicion upon others; and to convey such information as may enable those who have suffered losses to obtain restitution.

Whatever good remains in our power we must diligently perform. We must prevent, to the ut-
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most of our power, all the evil consequences of our crimes : we must forgive all who have injured us : we must, by fervency of prayer and constancy in meditation, endeavour to repress all worldly passions, and generate in our minds that love of goodness and hatred of sin, which may fit us for the society of heavenly minds. And, finally, we must commend and intrust our souls to Him who died for the sins of men ; with earnest wishes and humble hopes, that he will admit us with the labourers who entered the vineyard at the last hour, and associate us with the thief whom he pardoned on the cross !

To this great end you will not refuse to unite with me, on bended knees, and with humbled hearts, in fervent prayer to the throne of grace ! May the Father of mercy hear our supplications, and have compassion upon us !

“ O almighty Lord God, the righteous Judge of all the earth, who in thy providential justice dost frequently inflict severe vengeance upon sinners in this life, that thou mayest by their sad examples effectually deter others from committing the like heinous offences ; and that they themselves, truly repenting of their faults, may escape the condemnation of hell,—look down in mercy upon us, thy sorrowful servants, whom thou hast suffered to become the unhappy objects of offended justice in this world !

“ Give us a thorough sense of all those evil thoughts, words, and works, which have so provoked thy patience, that thou hast been pleased to permit this public and shameful judgment to fall upon us ; and grant us such a portion of grace and
godly

godly sincerity, that we may heartily confess and unfeignedly repent of every breach of those most holy laws and ordinances, which if a man do, he shall even live in them.

“ Let no root of bitterness and malice, no habitual and deadly sin, either of omission or commission, remain undisturbed in our hearts! But enable us to make our repentance universal, without the least flattering or deceitful reserve, that so we may clear our consciences before we close our eyes.

“ And now that thou hast brought us within the view of our long home, and made us sensible that the time of our dissolution draweth near, endue us, we humbly pray thee, O gracious Father, with such Christian fortitude, that neither the terrors of thy present dispensations, nor the remembrance of our former sins, may have power to sink our spirits into a despondency of thy everlasting mercies in the adorable Son of thy love.

“ Wean our thoughts and affections, good Lord, from all the vain and delusive enjoyments of this transitory world, that we may not only with patient resignation submit to the appointed stroke of death, but that our faith and hope may be so elevated, that we may conceive a longing desire to be dissolved from these our earthly tabernacles, and to be with Christ, which is far better than all the happiness we can wish for besides!

“ And in a due sense of our own extraordinary want of forgiveness at thy hands, and of our utter unworthiness of the very least of all thy favours—of the meanest crumbs which fall from thy table—O blessed Lord Jesus, make us so truly and universally charitable, that in an undissembled compliance

pliance with thy own awful command and most endearing example, we may both freely forgive and cordially pray for our most inveterate enemies, persecutors, and slanderers! Forgive them, O Lord, we beseech thee—turn their hearts, and fill them with thy love!

“ Thus, may we humbly trust, our sorrowful prayers and tears will be acceptable in thy sight. Thus shall we be qualified, through Christ, to exchange this dismal bodily confinement (and these uneasy fetters) for the glorious liberty of the sons of God.—And thus shall our legal doom upon earth be changed into a comfortable declaration of mercy in the highest heavens:—and all through thy most precious and all-sufficient merits, O blessed Saviour of mankind!—who with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, livest and reignest ever, One God, world without end, Amen*.

P

* See Rossell's Prisoner's Director:—a work of some merit—and which I have endeavoured, in my melancholy hours of leisure, to revise, and (I humbly hope) improve; and mean to leave behind me, in the hands of the Ordinary, as a small testimony of my sincere, but very weak, endeavours for the best welfare of unhappy men in confinement; to whom I have written a general Address, to be prefixed to the new edition of Rossell.

DR. DODD'S LAST PRAYER.

WRITTEN JUNE 27.

IN THE NIGHT PREVIOUS TO HIS SUFFERING.

GREAT and glorious Lord God ; Thou Father of Mercies, and God of all Comfort ! a poor and humble publican stands trembling in thy awful presence ; and, under the deep sense of innumerable transgressions, scarce dares so much as to lift up his eyes, or to say, " Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner ! "

For I have sinned, O Lord ! I have most grievously sinned against Thee ; sinned against light, against conviction ; and by a thousand, thousand offences, justly provoked thy wrath and indignation ! My sins are peculiarly aggravated, and their burden more than ordinarily oppressive to my soul, from the sight and sense I have had of thy love, and from the high and solemn obligations of my sacred character !

But, oppressed with consciousness, and broken in heart under the sense of guilt, I come, oh Lord ! with earnest prayer and tears, supplicating Thee, of thy mercy, to look upon me ; and forgive me for his precious merit's sake, which are infinitely more unbounded than even all the sins of a whole sinful world ! By his cross and passion, I implore, to spare and to deliver me, O Lord !

Blessed be thy unspeakable goodness for that wonderful display of divine love, on which alone is my hope and my confidence ! Thou hast invited,
oh

oh blessed Redeemer, the burdened and heavy-laden, the sick in soul, and wearied with sin, to come to Thee, and receive rest. Lord, I come ! Be it unto me according to thy infallible word ! Grant me thy precious, thy inestimable rest !

Be with me, thou all-sufficient God, in the dreadful trial through which I am to pass ! and graciously vouchsafe to fulfil in me those precious promises which Thou, in such fatherly kindness, hast delivered to thy afflicted children ! Enable me to see and adore thy disposing hand in this awful, but mournful event ; and to contemplate at an humble distance thy great example ; who did go forth, bearing thy cross, and enduring its shame, under the consolatory assurance of the joy set before Thee !

And oh ! my Triumphant Lord ! in the moment of death, and in the last hour of conflict, suffer me not to doubt or despond ! but sustain me in thy arms of love ; and oh, receive and present faultless to thy Father, in the robe of thy righteousness, my poor and unworthy soul, which thou hast redeemed with thy most precious blood !

Thus commending myself and my eternal concerns into thy most faithful hands, in firm hope of a happy reception into thy kingdom : Oh my God, hear me, while I humbly extend my supplications for others ; and pray, That thou wouldst bless the King and all his family ; that thou wouldst preserve the crown in his house to endless generations, and make him the happy minister of truth, of peace, and of prosperity to his people ! Bless that people, O Lord ! and shine, as thou hast done, with the light of thy favour, on this little

little portion of thy boundless creation. Diffuse more and more a spirit of Christian piety amongst all ranks and orders of men; and in particular fill their hearts with universal and undissembled love;—Love to thee, and love to each other!

Amidst the manifold mercies and blessings vouchsafed through thy gracious influence—thou Sovereign Ruler of all hearts!—to so unworthy a worm, during this dark day of my sorrows, enable me to be thankful; and in the sincerity of heart-felt gratitude to implore thine especial blessing on all my beloved fellow-creatures, who have by any means interested themselves in my preservation! May the prayers they have offered for me, return in mercies on their own heads! May the sympathy they have shown, refresh and comfort their own hearts! And may all their good endeavours and kindnesses be amply repaid by a full supply of thy grace, and abundant assistance to them in their day of distress;—in their most anxious hours of need!

To the more particular and immediate instruments of thy providential love and goodness to me, O vouchsafe to impart, Author of all good,—a rich supply of thy choicest comforts! Fill their hearts with thy love, and their lives with thy favour! Guard them in every danger: sooth them in every sorrow: bless them in every laudable undertaking: restore an hundred-fold all their temporal supplies to me and mine: and, after a course of extensive utility, advance them, through the merits of Jesus, to lives of eternal bliss.

Extend, great Father of the world, thy more especial care and kindness to my nearer and most dear connections. Bless with thy continual presence

sence and protection my dear brother and sister, and all their children and friends ! Hold them in thy hand of tender care and mercy ; and give them to experience, that in thee there is infinite loving-kindness and truth !—Look with a tender eye on all their temporal concerns ; and after lives of faithfulness and truth, oh bear them to thy bosom, and unite us together in thy eternal love !

But oh, my adorable Lord and hope, suffer me in a more particular manner to offer up to thy sovereign and gracious care my long-tried and most affectionate wife ! Husband of the widow, be thou her support ! sustain and console her afflicted mind ! enable her with patient submission to receive all thy will : and when, in thy good time, thou hast perfected her for thy blessed kingdom, unite again our happy and immortal spirits in celestial love, as thou hast been pleased to unite us in sincere earthly affection ! Lord Jesus, vouchsafe unto her thy peculiar grace and all-sufficient consolation !

If I have any enemies, oh, thou who diedst for thy enemies, hear my prayers for them ! Forgive them all their ill-will to me, and fill their hearts with thy love ! And, oh, vouchsafe abundantly to bless and save all those who have either wished or done me evil ! Forgive me, gracious God ! the wrong or injury I have done to others ; and so forgive me my trespasses, as I freely and fully forgive all those who have in any degree trespassed against me. I desire thy grace, to purify my soul from every taint of malevolence ; and to fit me, by perfect love, for the society of spirits, whose business and happiness is love !

Glory be to thee, oh God ! for all the blessings

thou hast granted me from the day of my creation until the present hour ; I feel and adore thy exceeding goodness in all ; and in this last and closing affliction of my life, I acknowledge most humbly the justice of thy fatherly correction, and bow my head with thankfulness for thy rod ! Great and good in all ! I adore and magnify thy mercy : I behold in all thy love manifestly displayed ; and rejoice that I am at once thy creature and thy redeemed !

As such, O Lord, my Creator and Redeemer, I commit my soul into thy faithful hands ! Wash it and purify it in the blood of thy Son from every defiling stain : perfect what is wanting in it ; and grant me, poor, returning, weeping, wretched prodigal—grant me the lowest place in thy heavenly house ; in and for his sole and all-sufficient merits—the adorable Jesus ;—who, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth ever, one God, world without end !

Amen and Amen, Lord Jesus !

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A
LETTER

TO THE
REVEREND DR. DODD,

Sent to him during his Confinement in Newgate.

DEAR SIR,

LET it not surprise you in this tremendous hour to be accosted by an old, perhaps forgotten, but still sympathizing, Friend. The world smiles in prosperity; the Christian loves in adversity; and the hour of Nature's sorrow is the important period for such a friendship.

From the first moment the melancholy news had reached my ear, how truly was my heart engaged in prayer and pity! I anticipated the dreadful pangs which rend your soul; and the awful consideration, that these things were but the beginning of sorrow, was ready to draw blood from my heart, as well as tears from my eyes. I turned to Him from whom proceeds all that is truly great and good, and was encouraged to entreat the merciful Redeemer to look down with tender pity, and cause this dark night to become the womb of a bright morning; yea, the brightest your eyes have ever seen.

Every stroke of your rod deeply affects me, but above all, I feel for your precious, your immortal soul.

Will you permit me, my dear Sir, to throw aside all reserve, while treating on this important subject? Shall I prevail with you to bear with the manner for the sake of the matter; and despise not truth though ignorantly uttered?

I fear you have lived a long time in that friendship with the world which the Spirit of God declares is enmity with himself. However excellent some or many of your actions may have been, you have rested in the letter, not in the spirit of Christianity; you have been contented without the experimental knowledge of those words, "He that is in Christ Jesus is a new creature." Your will, your affections, your desires and delights, have they not all been fixed on earthly objects? Rejoicing in the possession, or mourning the disappointment, your daily delight has not been in the divine communications of the Holy Spirit; fellowship with God has not been your chiefest joy; the pursuit of empty shadows found nearer access to your heart than the noble choice of following the despised Nazarene. Think not, dear Sir, I draw this judgment from the late unhappy event. O, no; that I only consider as the natural fruit of the unregenerate heart. The point I aim at is, the want of that change, that death unto sin, that new birth unto righteousness, whereby the children of wrath become the children of grace. St. Paul says, "I have fought the good fight, I have kept the faith:" therefore he was willing to be offered up, since nothing but a crown of righteousness presented itself to his opening prospect. He had kept that faith which purifieth the heart,

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overcometh the world, and quencheth all the fiery darts of the evil one.

I remember, when I was about fourteen, the season in which I was favoured with your most intimate acquaintance, you once told a story which I shall never forget, concerning one of the Scotch Divines, who said on his death-bed, "If every stone, timber, and nail in this house could speak, they would bear witness to the many hours of sweet communion my soul hath spent with God therein." O, Sir, can the beams of your house bear witness that your enjoyments have been such as eternity shall ripen! And this heavenly disposition, you must be sensible, can alone fit us for the enjoyment of the New Jerusalem. No object can give pleasure unless it meets with a sense which suits and apprehends it. The grain of corn is more welcome to the fowl than the richest pearl. So to the soul whose treasure is yet on earth, the beauties of the lovely Jesus shine in vain. But, alas! who can break this adamantine chain! Who can unlock the heart bound down with twice ten thousand ties, and bring the captive soul into the glorious liberty of the sons of God? Can disappointment, can reproach, dishonour, loss, or even death itself? Alas! these may torment, but never change the heart: it is a sight of the crucified Jesus alone which breaks your heart in pieces. This Jesus waits to do you good; hear him saying, Thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thy help. O that you would cry; his ear attends the softest prayer. This is my fear, lest you should forget there is no way into the sheepfold but through the door, and no way of entering that door but knowing ourselves

selves to be lost and undone creatures, whose ways have been altogether perverse before him, and then to be saved by faith in Christ alone.

How often has Christ appeared delightful even in a prison! Several have praised God for bringing them there, and by that means awakening them to a knowledge of their lost estate, that they might be made acquainted with a happiness till then unknown. Adorable Jesus! so work on the soul of this my unhappy friend, display thy pardoning love, and write it on his aching heart:

“No; my best actions cannot save,

“But thou must cleanse e’en them;

“Yet when on thee I do believe,

“My worst shall not condemn.”

I know not how to break off. My spirit deeply mourns both for your present and approaching sufferings, and equally for her who so sadly shares your every woe. Had you remained in prosperity, nothing would have been farther from my thoughts than a renewal of acquaintance; for I have found in being despised and trampled under foot of the great ones of the earth, more solid peace, more lasting joy, than my warmest wishes could ever have expected: but now I cannot forget you if I would, I long for your salvation; will you acknowledge all the wisdom of the world can never save you? Will you look for salvation from the mere mercy of God? How many have gone triumphantly to glory, even from under the hand of an executioner! My dear Sir, that triumph may be yours; and if you do not reject it, it surely shall.

shall. The king of terrors shall appear no longer terrible ; and your happy spirit, loosed from every earthly tie, and delighted with the freedom of the living water, shall spring into eternity with so feeling a joy as you have never known in all your life. You have tried the world and found it empty. Never did man strive more for the honours of it than you have done ; for that, you turned your back on the closest followers of the Lamb, the little few despised indeed of man, but whose lives were hid with Christ in God ; for that you have been conformed in all your life and conversation to the customs, fashions, and maxims of it : but while you were a slave to man, ungrateful man ! who neither thanked nor paid you, you slighted Him who is able to cast both body and soul into hell. But, O, the unbounded love of Jesus ! He blasted all your hopes ; He chastened and corrected. For what end ? Only to convince you how ready he is to receive and make you a beloved son. The wicked have no bands in their death, they will not listen to awakening fears ; but whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth : yea, the body may be given up to suffer, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.

I am not yet without hope, even for your life. It is founded on this : I know the hearts of all are in the hand of my God, from the king on the throne to the beggar on the dunghill ; and he turneth them what way soever he will. I know, if you seek but Daniel's faith, Daniel's God can shut the lion's mouth. If, with Nebuchadnezzar you have learned to acknowledge the Most High ruler over all, he can restore you again to your
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your former estate, or else take you to behold his glory. When I consider your great talents, and how much you might have done for God, I cannot help crying to the Lord once more to send you into his vineyard with a changed heart full of the Holy Ghost and power. And now, my dear Sir, what shall I say? My heart is full: I know not how to leave off: It is as though my pen could not part from the paper. Nature shrinks from that pang which is usually the sad attendant of a last farewell: but Grace cries out, Yet there is hope. An eternity of joy presents a kingdom where no horrid alarm of war shall break our eternal repose; where sorrow, death and parting shall be no more; and the Royal Army of Cross-bearers, who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, are ready to embrace and welcome you among them.

To that efficacious blood, with tears of love and sorrow, I commit you; and, though with reluctance, I must now conclude,

Your sincerely affectionate
and sympathizing friend,

MARY BOSANQUET.

Feb. 1777.

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By a Series of Correspondence, almost weekly, from the above Date, till within three Days of his Execution, Miss Bosanquet says she had Reason to believe he felt a contrite Heart, and found the Sinner's Friend to be his.—June 25th, he wrote her his last Farewell, as follows :

My dear Friend, June 25, 1777.

On Friday morning I am to be made immortal! I die with a heart truly contrite, and broken under a sense of its great and manifold offences, but comforted and sustained by a firm faith in the pardoning love of Jesus Christ. My earnest prayers to God are, that we may meet and know each other in that kingdom, towards which you have been so long and so happily travelling. I return you my most affectionate thanks for all your friendly attention to me; and have no doubt, should any opportunity offer, you will remember my excellent, but most afflicted partner in distress. I do not know where to direct to worthy Mr. Parker, but beg to trouble you with my dying love and kind remembrance to him. The Lord Jesus Christ be with our spirits. Amen.

W. DODD.

Soon after the Doctor's death, the lady received from a faithful minister of Jesus Christ, who constantly attended him, a very encouraging account,

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count, in which he declares he believes him to be singing the song of the redeemed, and concludes his letter with the following words :

“ Thus ended the mortal, and began the never-ceasing life of your old and my new friend :
“ and I bless God our Saviour for this new proof
“ of his saving grace, and the power of his precious blood.

“ The time is elapsed ; I have written more
“ than I intended, and yet not a tenth part of
“ what I could. You may be comforted, as I
“ have been richly. Your and my fears are at
“ an end.

“ May the God of all grace keep your and my
“ heart in the knowledge of him, yea, cause us
“ to grow in grace and love ! This is the earnest
“ prayer of

“ Your affectionate friend,
“ and willing servant in Christ.”

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DR. DODD'S
ACCOUNT OF HIMSELF*.

THE greatest affliction and oppression to my mind at present is, the piercing reflection that I, who have lived all my life in an endeavour to promote the truth of Christianity, should now become an obstacle to that truth, and a scandal to that profession;—that I, who have with all my power, and with all sincerity, laboured to do good, and be a blessing to my fellow-creatures, should now become an evil and a curse. What shall I, can I, ought I to do, to prevent, as much as in me lies, any such dreadful consequences of my shame and my crime? Will a public attestation of my sincere belief of Christianity, and an ingenuous detail and confession of my offences, be of any avail?—In order to do this, and to acquaint you in few words with a perfect knowledge of myself (though I should wish to do it more fully), be so good as to consider the few following particulars :

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* Of this account Dr. Dodd may be said to have only drawn the outlines; the picture, as it appears, was finished by Dr. Johnson.

I entered very young on public life, very innocent—very ignorant—and very ingenuous. I lived many happy years at West Ham, in an uninterrupted and successful discharge of my duty. A disappointment in the living of that parish obliged me to exert myself; and I engaged for a chapel near Buckingham Gate. Great success attended the undertaking: it pleased and elated me. At the same time Lord Chesterfield, to whom I was personally unknown, offered me the care of his heir, Mr. Stanhope *. By the advice of my dear friend, now in heaven, Dr. Squire, I engaged under promises which were not performed. Such a distinction too, you must know, served to increase a young man's vanity. I was naturally led into more extensive and important connections, and of course, into greater expences and more dissipations. Indeed, before, I never dissipated at all—for many, many years, never seeing a play-house, or any public place, but living entirely in Christian duties. Thus brought to town, and introduced to gay life, I fell into its snares. Ambition and vanity led me on. My temper, naturally cheerful, was pleased with company; naturally generous, it knew not the use of money; it was a stranger to the useful science of economy and frugality; nor could it withhold from distress, what it too much (often) wanted itself.

Besides this, the habit of uniform, regular, sober piety, and of watchfulness and devotion, wearing

* The present Lord Chesterfield.

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wearing off, amidst this unavoidable scene of dissipation, I was not, as at West Ham, the innocent man that I lived there. I committed offences against my God! which yet, I bless him, were always, in reflection, detestable to me.

But my greatest evil was expence. To supply it, I fell into the dreadful and ruinous mode of raising money by annuities. The annuities devoured me. Still I exerted myself by every means to do what I thought right, and built my hopes of perfect extrication from all my difficulties when my young and beloved pupil should come of age. But, alas! during this interval, which was not very long, I declare with solemn truth, that I never varied from the steady belief of the Christian doctrines! I preached them with all my power, and kept back nothing from my congregations which I thought might tend to their best welfare; and I was very successful in this way during the time. Nor, though I spent in dissipation many hours which I ought not, but to which my connections inevitably led, was I idle during this period; as my Commentary on the Bible, my Sermons to Young Men, and several other publications prove. I can say too, with pleasure, that I studiously employed my interest, through the connections I had, for the good of others. I never forgot or neglected the cause of the distressed; many, if need were, could bear me witness. Let it suffice to say, that during this period I instituted the Charity for the Discharge of Debtors.

Such is the plain and ingenuous detail of myself. I sincerely lament all I have done wrong,

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I love, and ever did, religion and goodness. I hate and abhor vice, and myself for ever having committed any. I look with peculiar detestation on the crime to which I am at present obnoxious; and I wish before I die, of all things, if possible, to make amends—by the most sincere and full confession and humiliation of myself.

W. DODD.

May 21. 1777.

The following DECLARATION Dr. DODD enclosed in a Letter to a Friend some time before he suffered.

THOUGH I acknowledge in all its atrocity, and more especially with a view to my peculiar circumstances and character, the offence for which I suffer,—yet, considering that it is punished with such sanguinary severity in no commercial state under heaven, and that in my case it has been fully atoned for, so far as human creatures can atone to each other, I cannot but judge my punishment rather hard:—and still more so, as that public (for whose benefit and example such ignominious death and punishment can alone be intended) has with a pleading (and almost unanimous) voice supplicated the throne, in the most humble manner, to show mercy, and avert the abhorred stroke, by assigning another, though perhaps not less afflictive punishment.

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In this dispensation, however, I look far beyond the hand of poor human vengeance, and adore the justice and goodness of God, who, correcting me in judgment for deviations from the purity of his Gospel, as a distinguished minister of it, has been pleased to call me thus by death to proclaim my repentance, and to attest my faith in Him; and to declare to all my fellow-creatures, and to my beloved countrymen in particular, for whose love to me I am under the highest obligations, my firm belief of the principles which I have long preached, and in my writings delivered with the utmost truth and sincerity; and which I thus seal with my blood, in perfect resignation to the will of my adorable Master, and in a firm dependence on those principles for the salvation of my own soul.

W. DODD.

*Letters to Two Noble Lords of His MAJESTY'S
Most Honourable Privy Council.*

LETTER I.

MY LORD*,

I HAVE committed a capital crime, for which the sentence of the law has passed upon me; and whether that sentence shall be executed in its full rigour, may, perhaps, depend upon the suffrage of your Lordship.

The shame and self-reproach with which I now solicit your commiseration, I hope no man will ever feel, who has not deserved to feel them like myself. But I will not despair of being heard with pity, when, under the terrors of a speedy and disgraceful death, I most humbly implore your Lordship's intercession.

My life has not been wholly useless; I have laboured in my calling diligently and successfully; but success inflamed my vanity, and my heart betrayed me. Violent passions have exposed me to violent temptations; but I am not the first whom temptation has overthrown. I have, in all my deviations, kept Right always in view, and have invariably resolved to return to it. Whether, in a prosperous state, I should have kept my resolution, public justice has not suffered me to know.

My

* Lord North, then Prime Minister.

My crime has been indeed atrocious, but my punishment has not been light. From a height of reputation, which perhaps raised envy in others, and certainly produced pride in myself, I have fallen to the lowest and grossest infamy; from an income which prudence might have made plentiful, I am reduced to live on those remains of charity which infamy has left me.

When so much has been given to justice, I humbly entreat that life, such as it must now be, may be given to merey; and that your Lordship's influence may be employed in disposing our Sovereign to look with compassion on,

My LORD,

Your LORDSHIP's most humble supplicant,

WILLIAM DODD.

June 11. 1777.

LETTER II.

MY LORD *,

NOT many days are now to pass before the fate of one of the most miserable of human beings will be finally determined. The efficacy of your Lordship's voice is well known; and whether I shall immediately suffer an ignominious death, or wander the rest of my days in ignominious exile, your opinion will probably determine. Do not refuse, my Lord, to hear the plea, whatever it may be, which I humbly oppose to the extremity of justice.

I acknowledge, my Lord, the atrociousness of my crime; I admit the truth of the verdict that condemned me; yet I hope, that when my evil is censured, my good may likewise be remembered; and that it may be considered how much that society which is injured by my fraud, has been benefited by my charitable labours.—I have offended; I am penitent; I entreat but for life, for a life which must pass certainly in dishonour, and probably in want. Do not refuse, my Lord, to compassionate a man who, blasted in fame and ruined in fortune, yet shrinks with terror from the precipice of eternity. Let me live, however miserable; and let my miseries warn all those to whom they shall be known, against self-indulgence, vanity, and profusion.

Once

* Earl Mansfield.

Once more, my Lord, let me beg for life ; and when you see me going from the gloom of a prison to the penury of banishment, do not consider public justice as wholly unsatisfied by the sufferings of,

My Lord,

Your LORDSHIP's most humble suppliant,

WILLIAM DODD.

June 11. 1777.

DR. DODD'S PETITION

(PRESENTED BY HIS BROTHER)

TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

SIRE,

IT is most humbly presented to Your Majesty by William Dodd, the unhappy convict now under sentence of death,

That William Dodd, acknowledging the justice of the sentence denounced against him, has no hope or refuge but in your Majesty's clemency :

That though to recollect or mention the usefulness of his life, or the efficacy of his ministry, must overwhelm him in his present condition, with shame and sorrow, he yet humbly hopes that his past labours will not wholly be forgotten ; and that the zeal with which he has exhorted others to a good life, though it does not extenuate his crime, may mitigate his punishment :

That debased as he is by ignominy, and distressed as he is by poverty, scorned by the world, and detested by himself, deprived of all external comforts, and afflicted by consciousness of guilt, he can derive no hopes of longer life, but that of repairing

repairing the injury he has done to mankind, by exhibiting an example of shame and submission, and of expiating his sins by prayer and penitence :

That for this end he humbly implores from the clemency of Your Majesty, the continuance of a life legally forfeited ; and of the days which by your gracious compassion he may yet live, no one shall pass without a prayer, that Your Majesty, after a long life of happiness and honour, may stand at the day of final judgment, among the merciful that obtain mercy.

So fervently prays the most distressed and wretched of Your Majesty's subjects,

WILLIAM DODD.

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MRS. DODD'S PETITION

(PRESENTED BY HERSELF)

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

MADAM,

IT is most humbly represented by Mary Dodd, the Wife of Dr. William Dodd, now lying in prison under sentence of death,

That she has been the wife of this unhappy man more than twenty-seven years, and has lived with him in the greatest happiness of conjugal union, and the highest state of conjugal confidence :

That she has been a constant witness of his unwearied endeavours for public good, and his laborious attendance on charitable institutions. Many are the families whom his care has delivered from want ; many are the hearts which he has freed from pain, and the faces which he has cleared from sorrow :

'That therefore she most humbly throws herself at the feet of the Queen, earnestly entreating that the petition of a distressed wife asking mercy

for a husband, may be considered as naturally soliciting the compassion of Her Majesty; and that when her wisdom has compared the offender's good actions with his crime, she will be pleased to represent his case to our Most Gracious Sovereign in such terms as may dispose him to mitigate the rigour of the law.

So prays Your Majesty's most dutiful subject and suppliant,

MARY DODD.

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Such were the last thoughts of a man whom we have seen exulting in popularity, and sunk in shame. For his reputation, which no man can give to himself, those who conferred it are to answer. Of his public ministry, the means of judging were sufficiently attainable. He must be allowed to preach well, whose sermons strike the audience with forcible conviction. Of his life, those who thought it consistent with his doctrine, did not originally form false notions. He was at first what he endeavoured to make others; but the world broke down his resolution, and he in time ceased to exemplify his own instructions.

Let those who are tempted to his faults, tremble at his punishment; and those whom he impressed from the pulpit with religious sentiments, endeavour to confirm them, by considering the regret and self-abhorrence with which he reviewed in prison his deviations from rectitude.

Whatever assistance his anxiety might prompt him to solicit in forming the petitions (which, however, he must be considered as confirming by his name) the account of his past life, and of his dying sentiments, are the effusions of his own mind. Those who read them with the proper disposition, will not read in vain.

A few Days before Dr. DODD suffered Death, the following Observations on the Propriety of Pardoning him, were written and sent to the Public Papers by Dr. JOHNSON.

YESTERDAY was presented to the Secretary of State, by the Earl Percy, a Petition in favour of Dr. Dodd, signed by twenty-three thousand hands. On this occasion it is natural to consider—

That in all countries penal laws have been relaxed as particular reasons have emerged :

That a life eminently beneficent, a single action eminently good, or even the power of being useful to the public, have been sufficient to protect the life of a delinquent :

That no arbiter of life and death has ever been censured for granting the life of a criminal to honest and powerful solicitation ;

That the man for whom a nation petitions, must be presumed to have merit uncommon in kind or in degree : for however the mode of collecting subscriptions, or the right of judgment exercised by the subscribers, may be open to dispute, it is at least plain that something is done for this man, that was never done for any other ; and Government, which must proceed upon general

neral views, may rationally conclude that this man is something better than other offenders have been, or has done something more than others have done:

That though the people cannot judge of the administration of justice so well as their governors, yet their voice has always been regarded :

That this is a case in which the petitioners determine against their own interest ; those for whose protection the law was made, entreat its relaxation ; and our Governors cannot be charged with the consequences which the people bring upon themselves :

That as this is a case without example, it will probably be without consequences, and many ages will elapse before such a crime is again committed by such a man :

That though life be spared, justice may be satisfied with ruin, imprisonment, exile, infamy, and penury.

THE END.



